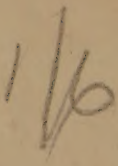
ORIGINAL PLAYS
BY
W. S. GILBERT

THIRD SERIES



ORIGINAL PLAYS

BY W. S. GILBERT

W. S. GILBERT'S PLAYS

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W. S. GILBERT

THIRD SERIES

CONTAINING

COMEDY AND TRAGEDY, FOGGERTY'S FAIRY
ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN
PATIENCE, PRINCESS IDA, THE MIKADO
RUDDIGORE, THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD
THE GONDOLIERS, THE MOUNTEBANKS
UTOPIA LIMITED

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
1923

PRINTED IN ENGLAND BY
WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
BECCLES.

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COMEDY AND TRAGEDY.

AN ORIGINAL DRAMA,

IN ONE ACT.

First performed at the Lyceum Theatre, London, Saturday, January 26th, 1884.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Duc d'Orleans, *Regent of France* ...	Mr. J. H. Barnes.
D'Aulnay, *Clarice's Husband*	Mr. G. Alexander.
Doctor Choquart	Mr. E. F. Edgar.
Abbé Dubois	Mr. E. T. March.
De Grancy	Mr. F. Griffin.
De la Ferté	Mr. A. Lewis.
De Courcelles	Mr. F. Rapheal.
Viscomte de Mauzun	Mr. N. Chisnell.
De Broglio	Mr. G. Lewis.
Joseph, *a Servant*	Mr. W. Russell.
Pauline, *Clarice's Sister*	Miss O'Reilly.
Clarice, *an Actress*	Miss Mary Anderson.

COMEDY AND TRAGEDY.

SCENE.—*Apartment in* CLARICE'S *house; night. A glass door opens on to a garden. The room is lighted as if for a reception.*

As the curtain rises, JOSEPH *enters, ushering* PAULINE, *in travelling-dress. She is much agitated.*

Paul. (*removing her hat, veil, and cloak*). Where is my sister? I must see her at once.

Jos. Madame is dressing.

Paul. Dressing? Is she going out to-night?

Jos. No, Mademoiselle; Madame has a supper-party at home.

Paul. Her husband—Monsieur d'Aulnay—where is he?

Jos. Monsieur d'Aulnay? Oh, has not Mademoiselle heard?

Paul. (*much agitated*). It is true then—they *are* separated?

Jos. Alas, Mademoiselle, too true!

Paul. It is terrible—terrible! They loved each other so dearly, and they have not been married a year.

Jos. Indeed, Monsieur seemed devoted to Madame.

Paul. Seemed! Did he not give up his commission in the Royal Body Guard and take service as a humble actor that he might be near her? Did he not forego rank, wealth, friends, everything—that he might marry her? And now, after one short year, their love is dead and they are strangers! When did this dreadful separation take place?

Jos. A week ago, yesterday.

Paul. (*rises*). And my sister gives a supper-party to-night! Why, the scandal will be known all over Paris to-morrow!

Jos. Alas! Mademoiselle, it is already a matter of common gossip!

Paul. And whom does she expect to-night?

Jos. Well, Mademoiselle must know, sooner or later. They are not such guests as Madame has been in the habit of receiving, or as Monsieur would approve if he were here.

Madame expects, among others, Monsieur de la Fere, the Abbé Dubois, Monsieur de la Ferté, and, I regret to add, the Regent, Monseigneur le Duc d'Orleans.

Paul. The Duc d'Orleans! Do I understand you that my sister has invited the Regent to sup with her? Oh, you must have been misinformed!

Jos. Mademoiselle, it is, unhappily, too true! I had it from Madame's own lips. I will send word to her that Mademoiselle awaits her. [*Exit* JOSEPH.

Paul. The Duc d'Orleans! The villain whose insolent admiration of her is a bye-word throughout Paris! The libertine who dared to couple her fair name with lies unspeakable, whose disgraceful attentions have embittered her life and her husband's for twelve months past! This man coming to sup with her to-night! Oh, it cannot be, it cannot be! (PAULINE *starts up, hearing* CLARICE.)

Clar. (*as she enters and descends staircase*). Mind, plenty of wine, plenty of music, and plenty of light, and, above all things, remember that, after my guests have arrived, no one is to interrupt us. (CLARICE *hurriedly makes for the door leading to garden. As her hand is on the lock she sees* PAULINE. *She is much agitated, but with an effort recovers herself.*) Pauline! *you* here? Why, my darling child, this is indeed a surprise! What do *you* do in this city of iniquity, you little innocent country primrose? Who has picked *you* and brought you into this perilous atmosphere? And why? Come! Tell me all about it!

Paul. Clarice, I came in great haste because I heard that you were unhappy. It seems that in that, at least, I was misinformed.

Clar. (*bitterly*). Unhappy! Yes. I am unhappy—or should be, if I stopped to think. But (*with forced gaiety*) I don't stop to think. I don't give myself time to think. I take things as I find them, and I make the best of them. Ha! ha! ha! That's true philosophy, Pauline. Of course you have heard what has taken place. Well, it's a pity, but it could not be helped.

Paul. But what in the world has caused this calamity?

Clar. Oh, I hardly know! No great thing—many small things; things ridiculous in detail, but serious in the aggregate. Besides, you forget—I have been married a year, and a year is a long time—in Paris.

Paul. A long time! And you loved him so dearly!

Clar. Ye—es—oh yes—I certainly loved D'Aulnay—in my way—once.

Paul. Once!

Clar. Yes. A pretty fellow whom one sees once a week for an hour one loves—but a pretty fellow whom one sees every day for a year! My dear Pauline, you've not tried it. Besides—haven't you heard? Husbands are going out—they are not to be worn at all this season.

Paul. (*reproachfully*). Clarice!

Clar. Why one must be in the fashion, child! Next season, perhaps—or the next but one—they may come in again. Well, in that case I have D'Aulnay's address.

Paul. Will he come, do you think, when he learns the Regent is an invited guest at your house?

Clar. Oh, you have heard that. Well, I confess I see a difficulty there—D'Aulnay is so straightlaced. Monsieur d'Orleans is a man of fashion, and is, perhaps, rather too much accustomed to look on women as playthings. (*This is said with involuntary and half-concealed bitterness.*) It is his only weakness. Let us be charitable, and look over it.

Paul. I cannot express the distress with which I listen to such sentiments. I can scarcely believe that they are uttered by the Clarice whose purity of life has shamed the attacks even of her unmanly persecutor. Think what you are losing! Hitherto even those who condemn the stage as infamous have excepted you from their sweeping denunciations. (*Goes to her.*) For Heaven's sake pause before you risk the proud and honoured position you have attained!

Clar. (*bitterly*). Proud! Honoured! Bah! You play with words. I am an actress—by law proscribed, by the Church excommunicated! While I live women gather their skirts about them as I pass; when I die I am to be buried, as dogs are buried, in unholy ground. (PAULINE *turns away in grief.*) In the mean time, I am the recognized prey of the spoiler—the traditional property of him who will best pay for me: an actress, with a body, God help her! but without a soul: unrecognized by the State, abjured by the Church, and utterly despised of all! In the face of these compliments, believe me, it is not easy to preserve one's self-respect, Pauline.

Paul. But the Regent—who has insulted you unspeakably—whose liveried servants have actually attempted to carry you away from your husband's arms, and who has treated his repeated challenges with cowardly and contemptuous silence—is this man to be an honoured guest at your table?

Clar. Ah, my dear, a pretty woman must not bear too hardly upon those whose heads her beauty has turned. Monsieur le Duc has been imprudent—reckless—culpable if you will; but then,

remember, the poor fellow is in love. If you put a kettle of water on the fire, it is not the fault of the water if it boils—it is the fault of the fire, my dear! As to my husband's challenges, why, notwithstanding his noble birth and his services in the Royal Body Guard, he is now but a stage-player—a mummer—a vagabond. Would you have the Regent of France condescend to meet a vagabond! No! He must draw the line somewhere; and he draws it at vagabonds' wives!

Paul. I see that my mission is fruitless. I will go. (*Resuming her mantle.*)

Clar. Yes, better go, my child. The scene that is to come is one that perhaps you had better not see.

Paul. I can believe it. Adieu, Clarice. I came in hope that I might yet save my sister. I go, broken-hearted that my sister should be beyond saving! [*Exit* PAULINE.

[CLARICE *watches* PAULINE *off, then locks the door by which she has gone out, and hurriedly opens the door leading to the garden.*

Clar. D'Aulnay! My husband! Quick!

D'AULNAY *enters from garden.*

D'Aul. My darling wife! (*embraces her*). Is it certain that we shall not be interrupted?

Clar. Quite certain! I have locked the only door by which any one could surprise us.

D'Aul. And is all ready?

Clar. All is ready.

D'Aul. The story of our separation is accepted?

Clar. Implicitly. I have made no secret of it, believe me. There is not a soul about the Court who does not believe that my love for you is dead, and that we are parted for ever.

[CLARICE *and* D'AULNAY *seated.*

D'Aul. And the Regent—the Duc d'Orleans?

Clar. Oh, he has fallen readily enough into the snare. I did as you bade me. I gave out, far and near, that I was weary of the humdrum respectability of sober married life—that, being free again, I intended to take my own course and enjoy myself. To disarm suspicion, I invited a dozen of his friends—the Abbé Dubois, De Courcelles, De la Ferté and others—and eventually the Regent himself: humbly, and with a sense of what was due from such as I to such as he, I invited the Regent himself! D'Aulnay, he will be here in half an hour.

D'Aul. At last! At last! Oh, my child, how long and

how bitterly have we waited for this! Tortured as I have been by the agony of impotent fury—goaded into frenzy by the sense of my utter helplessness under an accumulation of intolerable insult; and then to find *him* at last helpless and at *my* mercy! It is a revenge that is almost satisfying! In half an hour I shall be avenged, or beyond the reach of vengeance. If I fall, my poor Clarice——

Clar. (*rises*). No, no. For God's sake keep that thought from me, or my resolution will give way! If I am to go through with this, I must nerve myself to it by every means at my command! I must keep before me his repeated, his incessant insults—at the theatre—in the streets—nay, at my very door. I must remember his threats, his letters, his dastardly attempt to take me from you by force, and his mean and cowardly evasion when brought by you to book. It is enough to remember these things, for, when I do so, my blood is a-fire, and I am as brave as you are.

D'Aul. My darling! (*Embrace. Noise of carriage-wheels heard without.*)

Clar. Hush! They are coming! You must go now. When they have all arrived, I will contrive to detain him here alone! Oh, it will not be difficult! Wait in the garden, and watch your opportunity. Never fear but that it will come!

D'Aul. God bless my darling, and give her courage!

Clar. I have it, D'Aulnay! Fear not for me—I am brave as a man! Farewell!

[*He embraces her, and exit into garden. Voices hear laughing and talking without.*

Clar. They are coming! If he should be with them! If he should come fraught with death to my love! But there, this won't do. Courage, Clarice, courage! Remember the part you have to play!

Enter JOSEPH, *announcing.*

Jos. Monsieur de la Ferté, Monsieur de Courcelles, and his Excellency the Vicomte de Mauzun.

Enter the three Gentlemen *named* (*severally*).

Clar. (*with great gaiety*). Ah! Monsieur de la Ferté, over-joyed, indeed, to see you—how kind of you to come! I'm a lone widow now, and must be consoled. De Courcelles? No, no, I'm not going to call you Monsieur de Courcelles. (COURCELLES *bows and sits.*) If we're not old friends now, we shall be some day,

and we'll discount the intimacy that is to be. Mauzun! Of all men Mauzun! Now this is indeed delightful! (MAUZUN *bows ceremoniously.*) Ah, bah! how you great people bow and scrape, and how we little people laugh at you for it! Come, let's all be little people to-night?

Mauzun. We are indeed little people in the presence of Madame D'Aulnay.

Clar. Clarice! Clarice, if you love me. D'Aulnay's gone, and let his name go with him. (MAUZUN *bows and converses with* COURCELLES.) May it do him more good than it did me. Ha! ha! I believe, though, that ladies and gentlemen of the dignified aristocracy don't get to Christian names all at once.

La Ferté. Well, not all at once, perhaps; but we generally get to them in time.

Clar. Ah! then we of the *coulisses* begin with them. *We* only come to surnames when we quarrel, which we don't mean to do, do we?

Re-enter JOSEPH, *announcing, followed by the* ABBÉ DUBOIS *and* MONSIEUR DE GRANCY.

Jos. Monsieur l'Abbé Dubois, Monsieur de Grancy.

Clar. Monsieur le Ministre, your very good servant to command. De Grancy, I'm overjoyed to see you. His Royal Highness? Will he come?

Dub. His Royal Highness will be here shortly, but unhappily his stay will be but brief.

Clar. It is well—he will come. It is most kind of him to condescend to visit my humdrum home! But I don't intend to be humdrum any more. Will you teach me how not to be humdrum?

Dub. Alas, Madame! I have no pretensions to teach experts.

Clar. No pretensions. The Abbé Dubois—the great conversationalist, the brilliant epigrammatist! What was that you said about poor Clopin, the dramatic critic, who wrote a bad play—that Clopin forgot that his mission was not to *write* plays, but to teach people *how* to write plays. I'd have given a week's salary to have said that!

Dub. Madame, it is difficult not to be epigrammatic when one speaks of a dramatic author. (*Sits.*)

Re-enter JOSEPH.

Jos. Monsieur de Broglio and Monsieur le Docteur Choquart

Enter the Gentlemen *named.*

Clar. Welcome, De Broglio. Why, Doctor—my dear, dear Doctor, I had no idea that you were in Paris! Why, how grave you are! This is not a professional visit. You look as glum as if you had come to attend a patient *in extremis!*

Doct. Shall I confess to you, Madame, that I am attending one who, I fear, is in a very dangerous state.

Clar. (*aside*). What do you mean? As I am in perfect health, I must suppose that you are employing a figure of speech.

[*The guests are conversing in groups during this, till the* Duc d'Orleans *is announced.*

Doct. It is no figure of speech so to describe a good and virtuous lady who, for the first time in her life, is playing hostess to the *roués* of the Palais Royal.

Clar. Doctor, you presume on your footing in my house.

Doct. Madame, I am D'Aulnay's friend.

Clar. Then what do you here? These are not D'Aulnay's friends.

Doct. I am here to protect you.

Clar. I need no protector. Trust me, I can protect myself!

Re-enter Joseph, *announcing.*

Jos. His Royal Highness the Regent of France.

Enter the Duc d'Orleans *attended by four* Gentlemen. *All rise; the guests bow ceremoniously.*

Duke. Madame, I have the honour to salute you.

Clar. (*curtseying formally*). Your Royal Highness is too good. I am indeed honoured by Monseigneur's visit. That my poor house should be so complimented is a distinction of which I may be permitted to be vain.

Duke. If it be indeed a distinction, it is one that I would gladly have conferred many months since, had I been permitted to do so.

Clar. Ah, Monseigneur, be generous. You know how I was situated; my husband——

Duke. Ah, the selfishness of these husbands! They are the curse of enterprise!

Clar. Nay, be just to them; if there were no husbands there would be no enterprise.

Duke. No doubt. How true it is that nothing, however

insignificant, was created without an object. Even husbands have their value in the economy of nature. (*Converses with the other guests.*)

Clar. Come, gentlemen, let us adjourn to the drawing-room. We shall find cards, dice, and wine ready for us. Monsieur le Ministre, we'll follow you; but surely, I forget: your Royal Highness should have led the way. Oh, forgive my inexperience! (*The guests, some of whom have already ascended the staircase, begin to enter the room above, in conversation with each other as they go off.*) Monseigneur will perhaps permit me to take his arm?

Duke. With every pleasure, Madame.

[*By this time the party have all disappeared, and* CLARICE *is alone on the stage with the* DUKE.

Clar. Stop—one moment—my smelling-bottle.

Duke. Clarice—why, you are fainting. (*She leans on table by stairs.*)

Clar. No, no; it is nothing; I am subject to this. I shall be strong again directly. May I trouble you to open the window?

Duke. By all means. (*He opens the doors leading to the garden.*)

Clar. Thank you. How the air refreshes me! I am better now. Let us follow the others.

Duke. No—not yet, Clarice. Sit down here, with me, for a few minutes. The fresh air will revive you.

Clar. Then pray join your friends. I will follow presently. I am better, indeed.

Duke. Nay; I must remain to watch the effect of my prescription.

Clar. But what will they say? Your friends will remark our absence!

Duke. Have no fear. My friends are not in the habit of canvassing my proceedings. (*Sits beside her.*) They are happy enough without us. Let us be happy without them.

Clar. I am—very happy.

Duke. And so there is an end of D'Aulnay at last?

Clar. Yes; I suppose so! Poor D'Aulnay. They say he is at Marseilles.

Duke. Why do you sigh? Are you sorry for him?

Clar. A little, perhaps. But I'm sure I gave him every chance. I bore with him for a year.

Duke. What forbearance!

Clar. At first he was well enough. I mean, that when we quarrelled, he owned I was right, and gave in. That did very

well. Then he vowed I was wrong—but gave in. Well, that was endurable. But at length it came to this, that he vowed I was wrong, and he wouldn't give in. So, of course, we parted. Still, he was not a bad fellow—his faults were mere faults of temper.

Duke. Madame, he has my profound consideration. I am told that he is in the habit of expressing angry sentiments towards me—indeed, he has, on more than one occasion, done me the honour of suggesting that I should cross swords with him. It distressed me that I was unable to gratify him, but under the artificial conditions of modern society, it was unhappily impossible. I can conceive a highly rarefied state of civilization in which it might be permitted to high and low to run each other through the body without distinction of rank; but to that Utopian condition we have unhappily not yet arrived. (*Rises.*) When we do, I shall be pleased to oblige him; but in the mean time the only balm I am permitted to pour into his wounded soul is the assurance of my profound consideration.

Clar. Still, duke, D'Aulnay is a man of noble birth.

Duke. Clarice, he is an actor.

Clar. He became an actor for love of me.

Duke. He did well and wisely. But when he resigned his commission in the Body Guard, and took to the stage for his living, he did me the injury of placing it out of my power to recognize him as a gentleman.

Clar. Well, enough of D'Aulnay. Let us leave him alone.

Duke. With all my heart. (*Returns, sits as before.*) I trust that he will return the compliment. (*Taking her hand.*)

Clar. Nay, duke, you go too far.

Duke. You are not in earnest when you say that. You cannot be angry with me for loving you. (*Putting his arm round her waist.*)

Clar. No, no, duke, I cannot allow this. Pray be careful; we shall be overheard.

Duke. Nay, Clarice, you *shall* hear me now. For months you have received my homage with indignation, or with what is still harder to bear, with silence. Maddened by my passion I forgot what was due to you—ay, and to myself. You dismissed me with contempt, and you were right, and I loved you for it. Your eyes flashed scorn upon me. I deserved it, and I loved you for it. Your lips withered with their contempt. I had earned it, and I loved you for it.

Clar. Nay, duke—have pity—have pity!

Duke. After a bitter time of sickening disappointment, I am

raised to a pinnacle of happiness by this invitation. I take it as an overture of peace—am I wrong? I take it as a token of reconciliation—am I wrong? (D'AULNAY *appears through open door.*) I take it as an admission that you can pity—forgive—love. Tell me, am I wrong?

D'Aul. Yes, M. le Duc d'Orleans, you are wrong!

Duke (*starting to his feet—after a pause*). This is a trap.

Clar. (*rises*). Yes, sir, it is a trap.

Duke. You have deceived me—cheated me!

Clar. Yes—I have deceived you—cheated you.

Duke. Why have you done this, actress?

D'Aul. I, actor, will tell you. For more than a year, you, the Duc d'Orleans, Regent of France, strong in the security of a rank which I tell you, sir, you sully and degrade, have blighted our home-happiness as with the breath of an obscene pestilence. In this, sir, you, Regent of France, have acted like a knave. You have dared to assume that, because my wife is an actress, you would find her the easy prey of your carrion instincts. In this, sir, you, Regent of France, have acted like a madman. When, goaded to frenzy by your incessant insults, I tried to bring you to book, you entrenched yourself behind your dignity, and declined to recognize me. In this, sir, you, Regent of France, acted like a coward. Thrice have I challenged you, and thrice have you ignored my challenge. I have stooped to this trap that I might lure you into a confidence that would place you at my command. And, sir, I command you to fight me!

Duke. If I refuse?

D'Aul. If you refuse, I will whip you like a dog. (*Turns to* CLARICE.)

Duke. A strong measure.

D'Aul. I hope so.

Duke (*after a pause*). Hark ye, sirrah, I am not in the habit of explaining my course of action, and if I do so now, it is that you may understand how little your threats affect me. I refused to fight you because you are an actor, proscribed by the State, excommunicated by the Church—a statutory vagabond and a social outcast. If a scullion were to challenge me, I should so far recognize him as to have him flogged. An actor is entitled to no recognition at all. Now, sir, you have your answer. Stand aside and let me pass!

D'Aul. Stay. As you say, I am an actor, and the law proscribes me. As an actor I have just attained the summit of an actor's ambition—an engagement at the Theatre Français, and that engagement is here. (*Taking out a paper.*) Well, sir,

I destroy that engagement (*tearing it up; throws it at his feet*), and, on the honour of an officer and a gentleman, I will never set foot upon the stage again. Now, sir, I am no longer an actor. I have resumed my rank, and you cannot refuse to fight me.

Duke. It shall be as you wish. I only stipulate that it shall never be known to any but our three selves that I have condescended to meet a person of your calling.

D'Aul. Sir, the degradation I am about to inflict upon you shall never be published by either of us.

Duke. Good! But one word. (*To* CLARICE.) Madame, I am free to admit that I have wronged you and your husband, and I should be loth to do further injury to yourself or to him. But, Madame, it is right that you should, as you are your husband's accomplice in this scheme of revenge, know that I am an unerring swordsman, and if I fight your husband I kill him.

Clar. (*after a pause*). Monsieur le Duc, you must fight.

Duke. So be it. When and where?

D'Aul. Now, in this garden.

Duke. You are mad. The house is full of my friends.

Clar. Have no fear of them. I will take upon myself to say that they shall not interfere. I charge myself with the task of keeping their attention engaged until the issue is known.

Duke. As you please. Have the goodness, sir, to show the way. Madame, I regret that you compel me to atone for the reparable wrong I have done you, by inflicting upon you an injury that nothing can repair. Accept the assurance of my sympathy.

[*Exeunt* DUKE *into garden*; D'AULNAY *embraces* CLARICE, *and follows.*

Clar. What have I done? Am I mad? He will be killed —D'Aulnay will be killed! Oh no, no, no—not that—not that! It cannot be! D'Aulnay—my dearly loved! my heart! my life! Grace of Heaven, what have I done? I cannot bear it! I must stop them! (DOCTOR *enters from upper room in converse with* LA FERTÉ; *rest of the guests follow, laughing, and in conversation.* DOCT. The silver mark is at 120 livres, gold 800—a depreciation of 70 per cent.) D'Aulnay—D'Aulnay—come back! (*Runs to window-door, and opens it. As she does so half a dozen guests come down the stairs laughing and talking. She suddenly closes the door and puts her back to it.*)

Dub. Eight thousand francs! you shall have them on

Thursday. Against such devil's luck who can fight? I'faith, not I! Clarice, alone? Why, where's the Regent? (*Two more come down the stairs, one counting out money into the other's hand.*)

Clar. Alas! Gone! Despatches to dictate, I believe. You will forgive my absence, but the Duke's time was precious, and he feared to join you lest he might be tempted to overstay his leisure. But are you tired of play already? (*Three more come down.*)

Dub. Nay, we came to seek you. To tell the truth, without you the fun began to flag.

Clar. Well, let's whip it up again. What shall we do? Tableaux? Charades? Proverbs? Come, for Heaven's sake suggest something, somebody!

La Ferté. Shall we say tableaux?

Dub. Gentlemen, we have all heard of Clarice's talent for improvisation. May we pray that we may be favoured with an example thereof?

All. Yes, yes—an improvisation.

Doct. Yes, by all means!

Clar. An improvisation—good. Be it so! On what subject shall I improvise? Quick, quick—a subject; you must give me a subject—any subject—tragedy, comedy—anything you like—only, for Heaven's sake, be quick!

La Ferté. We are here to amuse ourselves, and Clarice excels in comedy.

Several Guests. Comedy! Comedy!

Mauzun. Yes, she's great in comedy.

Doct. Comedy, by all means.

Clar. Comedy, then.

Dub. Gentlemen, to say that Clarice excels in comedy is to admit that you have forgotten her "Death of Cleopatra."

La Ferté. Nothing to her "Quack Dentist with the Toothache."

Dub. The "Lament of Artemisia of Halicarnassus."

La Ferté. Not a patch on her "Pig-driver in a Fog!"

Clar. Shall it be comedy, then?

La Ferté. Tragedy!

Dub. Comedy!

Doct. Gentlemen, let us benefit by this difference of opinion. Let us say comedy first, and tragedy afterwards.

All. Good, by all means, etc.

Clar. Good—that's understood: comedy first, tragedy afterwards. Come, give me a subject, quick, a comedy subject? Heavens, how slow you are!

Mauzun. Stay—one moment. (*All attentive.*)

Clar. What is it?

Mauzun. I heard a noise in the garden.

Clar. Oh, the servants amusing themselves, that's all. We have our fun here, they have their fun there. Come, quick, a subject.

Mauzun. Nay, I heard the clashing of swords—I am sure of it. (*Going towards garden door.*)

Clar. No, no! Gentlemen, you must do me a favour; you must not venture into that garden! The truth is I am preparing a little surprise for you; if you go into the garden now you will spoil all. I am sure I need not say more. (*Locking door and giving the key to the* DOCTOR.) Here, Doctor, I entrust you with the key. I charge you—allow no one to open that door on any consideration. Now then, quick, a subject—a subject—a subject!

Dub. Let me see. You are a strolling player; you enter a tavern—you are challenged as to who you are, and you describe yourself. There!

All. Bravo! Very good! etc.

Clar. Good! I am an actor—a strolling actor—and I describe myself. That's very good; that will do. (*All listening intently, some grouped on the staircase, others seated.*) One moment—ah—now. (*Recites with animated gestures.*) "Who am I, gentlemen? I am Artaxerxes! I am Antony the Great! I'm a doge, a king, a councillor, a burgess, a lackey. I am the constable who seizes the beggar; nay, I am the beggar seized by the constable. I am everybody; I am nobody. I command and I obey. I feast starving; I starve feasting. Beware of me, for I am a very rogue—a swaggering roysterer, with ragged elbows, hat a-cock, and bilbo ready." (*All laugh admiringly.*)

Doct. Don't interrupt!

Clar. "A rogue, said I? Nay, a highwayman—a housebreaker—a murderer to command, at a purse of pistoles the job, and short shrift to my quarry! (*Laughter.*) But take heart; I am the best of men. I love good. I give purses. I bless all. Yet do I curse freely, and, purses notwithstanding, I am but a greedy griping, grasping, miserly curmudgeon, who'd die i' the dark to save a farthing rushlight—a very Barabbas too, or a High Pontiff, or a Grand Seigneur, with a dancing seraglio, as it shall please you. I die thrice a-night, but they bury me not; nay, I am a ghost, with none to lay me; but a ghost, look you, of flesh, and to spare, yet not spare of flesh, as this rotundity shall advise you. (*All exclaim,* "Admirable!" "Excellent!" *etc.*) And yet no ghost, but a very observable and most mortal

man, with a pretty taste in flagons and an eye for a plump brown wench, go to! I am a bundle of contradiction—a mass of incongruities; here to-day, gone to-morrow—a thing of no moment: a breath, a puff ball, a gossamer! Good sirs, I am an actor!" (*All applaud*—Doct. Marvellous! A really fine piece of acting. *Dub.* Excellent, indeed, without a doubt! *During this she is much overcome, looks anxiously towards window, totters, supports herself against chair.*)

Clar. (*resuming with a great effort*). "If you ask me—if you ask me——" (*A cry heard without—she breaks down.*) Gentlemen, I cannot go on; my heart leaves me. My husband! he is without, with the Duc d'Orleans. They are fighting! I heard his cry! He is wounded, perhaps killed! Oh, gentlemen, gentlemen, for the love of Heaven separate them! I have caused this. He is my husband—my dear, dear husband! He is my life, and I have caused this; and oh, God, he is dying! (*Sobs hysterically on her knees.*)

All. Admirable! excellent! (*Half aside to each other*)

Clar. You look at me, but you do not move. Gentlemen, I am not acting; I am in fearful earnest. Oh! my love! my love! And I have done this! As I speak my husband is being killed! Will none of you separate them? (*Goes to door, and beats frantically against it.*) D'Aulnay, D'Aulnay, I am coming to you! (*She wrenches at the door in vain, for it is locked; at last she leans exhausted against it.*)

All. Bravo! Admirable!

Dub. You see now why I asked for tragedy.

All. Excellent, indeed.

Clar. Oh men, men! have you no eyes? Don't you know when a wretched woman is breaking her heart? (*Suddenly.*) Doctor! I gave you the key. (*Rushing to the* Doctor *and kneeling to him.*) You are D'Aulnay's friend. The key! for God's sake give me the key! (*All exclaim as before.*)

Doct. (*looking attentively at her*). Gentlemen, this woman is not acting! Her colour comes and goes—she is in terrible earnest.

Clar. Yes, yes, in terrible earnest! They are killing him! Oh, God, I cannot bear this.

Dub. Doctor, you have paid her the highest compliment an actress ever received. If she can impose upon so old a hand as you, she is an actress indeed!

La Ferté. Doctor, you're too emotional.

Doct. Gentlemen, at the risk of encountering your ridicule, I shall take upon myself to believe she is in earnest—and, so believing, I shall unlock that door.

All. Ha! ha!
Mauzun. Doctor, they're laughing at you.
Clar. God bless you! he believes me! he believes me! Quick! the door—the door!

[*The* DOCTOR *goes to the door, and unlocks it, as the others laugh at him.* CLARICE *rushes to the door and meets her husband—pale, without his coat and waistcoat, and with a sword in his hand, which he wipes with a handkerchief.*

Doct. D'Aulnay! (*All start. Momentary picture.*)
Clar. (*hurriedly in a whisper*). Are you unhurt?
D'Aul. Quite.
Clar. And the Duke?
D'Aul. Wounded to the death.
Clar. (*recovering herself with a supreme effort, and leading her husband forward*). Gentlemen, I told you that I was preparing a little surprise for you—this is it! Doctor, your pardon for having made you an innocent accomplice in my little deception. (DOCTOR, *expressing annoyance, pulls out snuff-box; snuffs.*) Gentlemen, I have only to thank you for the kind applause with which you have been so good as to reward my humble effort to entertain you!

[*Curtseys. All the guests applaud, some ridiculing the* DOCTOR *as the curtain falls.*

FOGGERTY'S FAIRY.

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL FAIRY FARCE,

IN THREE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

FREDERICK FOGGERTY, WALKINSHAW } *Young Surgeons without Practice.*

TALBOT, *a Wholesale Cheesemonger.*

DR. LOBB, DR. DOBB } *Mad Doctors.*

BLOGG, *a Mad Keeper.*

UNCLE FOGLE, WALKER, BALKER } *Wedding Guests.*

JENNIE TALBOT { *Engaged in Act I. to* FOGGERTY. / *Engaged in Act II. to* WALKINSHAW.

THE FAIRY REBECCA.

ROSELEAF, DEWDROP } *Attendant Fairies.*

MISS DE VERE, *a Romantic Old Lady.*

MISS DELIA SPIFF, *a Matter-of-fact Old Lady.*

LOTTIE, TOTTIE } *Jennie's Bridesmaids.*

AUNT BOGLE, *and Others.*

FOGGERTY'S FAIRY.

ACT I.

CENE.—*Drawing-room in* TALBOT'S *house on the morning of his daughter's marriage to* FOGGERTY. *A large bow-window leads into a garden.* TALBOT *is discovered. The following guests are disposed about the room*—UNCLE FOGLE (*a snuffy old gentleman*), AUNT BOGLE (*a stout lady*), WALKER *and* BALKER (*two young men*), *and others. All are in extremely low spirits, except* TALBOT, *who endeavours to infuse a little cheerfulness into the company. All wear favours.*

All (*sighing*). Ah!

Uncle Fogle. Oh, dear me, dear me!

Tal. What *is* the matter with you all? Do try and be heerful. If my only daughter *is* going to be married to a enniless young apothecary, there's no occasion to treat her redding as though it were a funeral. Pray, pray remember that his is, after all, a festive occasion.

Fogle. My dear John, I wouldn't, for the world, say a word o cast a gloom over these—well, these rejoicings; but I can't elp thinking, that, with her attractions, Jenny might have ooked a little higher. You understand, I don't *say* it—I con-ne myself to *thinking* it.

Aunt Bogle. You see, John, you know so little of Mr. oggerty.

Tal. I knew him when he was a little boy of nine; he was very clean little boy of nine.

Bal. Ah! but a man's character is not formed at nine.

Fogle. However, it's no use crying over spilt milk.

Aunt B. Very true—what's done can't be helped.

Walker. Except it's mutton—and then what's *under-done* an't be helped. (*All smile sadly at* WALKER'S *joke.*)

Tal. (*shaking* WALKER'S *hand*). Thank you, Tommy; it's very kind and thoughtful of you to make that joke.

Walker. I'll make another presently.

Tal. Thank you. I'm sure you will. I won't forget it. God bless you, Tommy.

Aunt B. After all, Mr. Foggerty *may* be a very respectable young man.

Uncle F. Equally, of course, he may *not*; but let us not anticipate disaster.

Tal. What was I to do? Jenny has, somehow, got a ridiculous idea into her head that she could never love any man who had ever loved before, and she is weak enough to believe that she has found this monstrosity in Foggerty. I've told her all sorts of anecdotes to his disparagement—not exactly true ones because I can't find out any—but the sort of anecdotes that I dare say are true if one only knew. It's a painful thing, gentlemen, for a father to have to admit, but my undutiful girl won't believe me.

Fogle. It's a sad thing when a girl won't believe her own father!

Walker. If she won't believe her own father, whose father will she believe? (*All smile sadly at* WALKER'S *joke.*)

Tal. Thank you, my boy—thank you! It was just the same with poor, broken-hearted Walkinshaw. She fell in love with Walkinshaw because she thought *he* had never loved before, but she found out from Foggerty that Walkinshaw had already been engaged to somebody, so that settled *him*. Then she fell in love with Foggerty. We did all we could to fix him with an affair of some kind, but in vain; it's true we *did* rake up an old boyish flirtation of his, but he was rather young at the time—only nine—and it's not likely to have been serious.

Aunt B. I don't know—a boy who flirts at nine will flirt at ninety, that's *my* experience.

Bal. Nine is a critical age—a man's character is often formed at nine.

Tal. (*looking off*). But Jenny's coming down—she's in the highest possible spirits, and I don't want her to be depressed. Those who feel they really can't bear up had better, perhaps, go and shed some tears in the garden (*all go off except* AUNT BOGLE, UNCLE FOGLE, and TALBOT), and, those who remain please remember that you've been asked in order to contribute to the general hilarity, and, for goodness' sake, don't forget that this is really and truly a festive occasion. Come, let us all smile.

[*All smile grimly as* JENNY *enters, in a flood of tears and dressed in morning dress. She is followed by*

LOTTIE *and* TOTTIE, *dressed as bridesmaids. She throws herself down on a chair, weeping bitterly.* LOTTIE *and* TOTTIE *comfort her.*

Jenny (*weeping*). Oh dear! oh dear! What *shall* I do?

Tal. There's Jenny at it now! Bless my heart, she'll have a red nose at the church!

Lot. There, there—don't cry—don't cry!

Tot. It's sure to be all right—don't cry!

Tal. Now what is it, and why are you not dressed? What *are* you crying for?

Jenny. Oh, papa, papa—I'm to be married this morning, and——

Tal. She's to be married this morning, and she's crying about it! Isn't that like a woman? And whose fault is it, I should like to know?

Jenny. Oh, papa, I'm not crying because—because I'm g-g-going to be married to Frederick—but I've g-got to be at the church in half an hour, and my dress hasn't come home yet. (*Fresh burst of grief!*) Oh dear! oh dear! What *shall* I do?

Tal. Dress not come home?

[*During all this* UNCLE FOGLE *and* AUNT BOGLE *preserve a ridiculous and immovable smile.*

Jenny. No, it was tight under the arms, so I sent it back, and it was to have come home this morning, and I've nothing to wear!

Aunt B. Don't cry, child. I've my own wedding-dress at home. It was made in 1820. I've never worn it but once. I'll lend it to you.

Tal. Why, that'll be the very thing.

Jenny (*sobbing*). No—no. You—you're too fat. (UNCLE F. *and* AUNT B., *who have been smiling fixedly all this time, suddenly look disgusted.*) I mean I'm too thin. (*Exeunt* AUNT B. *and* UNCLE F. *in a huff.*) Oh dear! what shall I do?

Tal. Come, come. I'll send for it. It'll be here directly. (*To* LOT. *and* TOT.) Pick her up, my dears, pick her up, and, above all things, don't let her have a red nose at the church. Powder it, my dears; powder it. This is a festive occasion and it absolutely must be powdered. [*Exit* TAL.

Lot. There! It's sure to arrive in time.

Tot. I'm sure I hope it will, if it's only to spite the ill-natured people who are always running Mr. Foggerty down.

Jenny. I don't care what they say. He has one virtue that would sanctify him in my eyes though his errors were legion. He, at least, has never loved before.

Lot. Well, it's possible, dear, of course.

Jenny. Possible! I have it on the very best authority. He told me so himself. *He* ought to know, I suppose.

Tot. He *ought* to, dear, of course.

Jenny. Oh, would you have me doubt the man I love? Would you have me love the man I doubt? Oh no! no! Love doubts not. Doubt loves not. He says he has never loved, and it is enough.

Lot. (*to* Tot.) I'm sure I hope he hasn't, for if she found out, too late, that he had deceived her, what would she do?

[*Exeunt* Lottie *and* Tottie.

Jenny (*dreamingly*). What would I do? I don't know. It would be something with a knife in it, and there would be blood. I don't know whose—perhaps his—perhaps mine! Oh, I dare not think of it!—I dare not think of it!

Enter Foggerty, *sticking a flower in his buttonhole.*

Fog. There. It's wonderful how a tastily selected vegetable sets one off. (*Sees* Jenny.) Jenny! My own! Why, not dressed yet? What's the matter?

Jenny (*dreamily*). I say I dare not think of it.

Fog. Why not?

Jenny (*dreamily*). There would be blood, wouldn't there?

Fog. If you dressed yourself? No, I don't see why there should. There, go and put on your things.

Jenny (*dreamily*). Yours or mine?

Fog. Yours, of course. What do you mean?

Jenny. I mean, if I found out that you had ever loved another——

Fog. Oh, of course, in that case mine; I would shed it myself.

Jenny. But you never have?

Fog. I? Never!

Jenny. This flirtation—when you were nine?

Fog. It was nothing. She made eyes at me in church.

Jenny. And what did you do?

Fog. I fled.

Jenny. In horror?

Fog. In horror. It was so bold of her. I was appalled.

Jenny. My delicate-minded Frederick! Oh, he has never loved till now!

Fog. Jenny, we are to be married to-day; do you think I might——

Jenny. I think so, dear; it is our wedding-day.

Fog. Under the circumstances, I think. (*Kisses her. Both sigh.*)

Jenny. I don't know how it is, it's very strange and unaccountable and unwomanly; but, although my dress don't fit, I feel almost happy!

Fog. I am glad you are happy, Jenny.

Jenny. I have always said that my love should only be given to one who had never loved before. I will not have a heart at second-hand. *My* husband must be one whose torch of love was lit by me alone, and you are such an one, are you not?

Fog. Yes; many a night and oft have I lain awake gazing at the moon, and wondering what manner of thing this love might be of which I had heard so much, this strange and irrational desire to spend a lifetime with the adored object; and, when I renewed my old acquaintance with you, the sun broke on my darkness, and all seemed clear as summer noon!

Jenny. My darling!

Fog. Do you think I might again?

Jenny. Yes, dear, I think so.

Fog. No, no—better not—better not.

Jenny. In *my* eyes, a man who has once loved is as a defaced postage-stamp—interesting, perhaps, to the collector, but to all others a thing of naught.

Fog. Such as poor Walkinshaw, for example.

Jenny. Such as Mr. Walkinshaw. I do not think I ever loved him, but he interested me because I believed that I was the first that had ever kindled the fire of love within his heart. But, to my horror and disgust, before we had been engaged a fortnight I learnt from you that he had already loved another.

Fog. I felt it to be my duty not to conceal from you a fact so material to your happiness, my poor child.

Jenny. Poor then, but poor no longer. Rich in the devotion of a heart that throbs for me, and me alone!

Fog. Oh! don't you think I might venture once more, to—— No, no. We can wait—we can wait.

Enter WALKINSHAW. *He is in a most depressed condition, but gorgeously dressed, nevertheless.*

Jenny. Mr. Walkinshaw!

Wal. Nay, don't mind me. Proceed with your fondlings. Time was when I could not have witnessed them. But I must get used to it—it's good practice. Go on.

Jenny. It's your own fault, Mr. Walkinshaw. You led me to believe that yours was a virgin heart.

Fog. Too bad, Walkinshaw—too bad.

Wal. (*furiously*). Foggerty, I submit to Miss Talbot's reproaches, for I respect and sympathize with the feelings that give them birth. But from you I will *not* stand it. Take care, sir—take care!

Jenny. Wouldn't you rather retire, Mr. Walkinshaw? It *must* pain you to see us like this.

Wal. No—I must learn to bear it. Go on; but do it by degrees. Put your arm around her waist, Foggerty. There—let me get used to that first. (*Writhes in anguish.*)

Jenny. If you had been all that you represented yourself to be, you would to-day have stood in Frederick's place, and he would, very likely, have been *your* best man.

Wal. And bad would have been the best! Miss Talbot, it is true that I had already loved, but whom? A woman who lived on actions for breach of promise—who had already brought eighteen such actions, and who was seeking every opportunity to make me the defendant in a nineteenth. Foggerty, oblige me by allowing Miss Talbot to rest her head on your shoulder.

Fog. Do you mean it? (*She does so.*)

Wal. Oh, it is hard to bear!—it is hard to bear! (*Writhing.*) Now kiss her. (FOGGERTY *does so.*) Oh! ! ! (*Writhing.*)

Jenny. Mr. Walkinshaw, you deliberately deceived me, and I can never believe you again.

Fog. I'm surprised at you, Walkinshaw, I am indeed.

Wal. Miss Talbot, I admit that I deceived you. Still, if you will so far forget the past as to extend credence to me when I tell you, on the faith and honour of a broken-hearted gentleman, that your wedding-dress has just arrived, you will pour one drop of balm into a wound that has hitherto yawned balmless.

Jenny. My wedding-dress arrived! And *you* brought it! Oh, thank you, thank you. Mr. Walkinshaw, there is much that is very nice about you. Oh, why did you deceive me once? But for that I might even now be—but no (*looking at* FOGGERTY), it is better as it is! [*Exit* JENNY.

Fog. Ha! ha! ha! Poor Walkinshaw!

Wal. Cheat! impostor! snake!

Fog. Not at all, Walkinshaw. I've merely profited by your example.

Wal. Oh, this is hard—this is bitterly hard! However, you're not married yet, that's one comfort.

Fog. No; but I shall be in half an hour—and that's another.

Wal. Don't be too sure; I have news for you. Delia Spiff, your late *fiancée*, arrived from Melbourne yesterday.

Fog. Are you in earnest?

Wal. Look at that. (*Hands newspaper.*)

Fog. (*reads*). Blackball line—"Red Knight"—specie—passengers on board—Miss Delia Spiff! What's to be done? She'll come here of course! The Talbots are her only living relatives! Why, she may arrive at any moment, and if she should——

Wal. It would be a just retribution. You trifled with her, sir! (*Sternly.*)

Fog. Trifled with her? Nonsense! you *can't* trifle with an old woman with a green umbrella. Besides, I was in Melbourne, starving, penniless. There, under my very nose, so to speak, was a comic old dowager, absolutely rolling in bank notes and sound securities—rolling in them, sir—under my very nose! What was I to do?

Wal. A man of proper feeling would have looked the other way.

Fog. I had the bank notes before my eyes; they dazzled me. I didn't see the dowager—at least not clearly—until some weeks after I proposed for her. As soon as my eyes got used to the glare of the money the dowager dawned upon me.

Wal. How did she look?

Fog. Fearful! I couldn't do it. I couldn't, indeed. *You* couldn't do it. I didn't like to *tell* her so, so I implied it gently and delicately. In fact, I bolted, and came to England. I found Jenny, the friend of my childhood, young and cheerful. She was engaged to you; but, nevertheless, she was quite cheerful. I felt it to be my duty to let her know how basely you had deceived her. You were dismissed, and I stepped into your shoes, in the assumed character of a gentleman who had never loved before. And in half an hour I marry her.

Wal. Supposing, always, that Spiff don't turn up.

Fog. Walkinshaw, she *shan't* turn up. I won't give her time to turn up; we'll be off at once. (*Impatiently.*) What are we waiting for? Why don't they come? Why don't we start? What an extraordinary thing it is that a woman cannot be punctual! (*Calling.*) Jenny, are you ready? What! "five minutes?" It's an unreasonable time. Can't you come as you are? "Impossible?" Ridiculous! (*Getting more impatient.*) What *is* the reason of this preposterous delay? Why does everything go wrong to-day? Why have you got a confounded green waistcoat, and a ridiculous red tie? (*Pulling him about.*)

Wal. Don't! I'm dressed for a wedding!

Fog. Dressed for a wedding? You're dressed for a lobster

salad! (*To footstool.*) You get out! (*Kicking it.*) You're always in the way!

Wal. (*at door*). This is what it is to play with women's hearts! But a terrible revenge will be mine. The wedding breakfast has yet to be eaten, and I supply the wine. [*Exit.*

Fog. Upon my soul, I believe I'm the unluckiest dog breathing! I did think I was safe this time. She'll come here, of course—and then—— Why don't that girl come? (*Calling.*) Jenny, do come along! Never mind the hooks and eyes. You can do them in the carriage. What? "Couldn't think of such a thing." There, isn't that a woman all over? Dress—dress—dress. Always dressing, and never done with it. (*Looking at watch.*) Half-past eleven! We shan't get to the church for an hour, and if Delia *should* turn up! It's fearful—it's more than fearful. It's appalling! It's a fix that nothing short of a fairy godmother could get me out of. Why haven't I a fairy godmother? People used to have them. You had only to invite them to your christening, and they'd do anything for you. Now, I call that gratitude. But fairy godmothers are out of fashion now, and gratitude went out with them. Still, if there is such a thing as a guardian angel watching over me, here is an opportunity to show what she's worth, that may never occur again. (*Slow music. The wall opens, and the fairy* REBECCA *is discovered standing in front of a revolving star. He does not see her, but he hears the slow music.*) There's a confounded German band outside, with the clarionet out of tune, as usual.

Reb. (*coming down*). Mr. Foggerty!

Fog. Eh! (*Turns and sees her.*) Hallo! I beg your pardon, but——

Reb. You don't know me?

Fog. I—that is—— Well, no, I *don't* know you.

Reb. I'm the Fairy Rebecca!

Fog. The Fairy Rebecca?

Reb. Yes; don't be frightened. I'm a good fairy.

Fog. Now, you be off; we've nothing for you. Come, away you go.

Reb. You don't believe me?

Fog. No, I don't believe you.

Reb. (*humbly*). Upon my word I'm speaking the truth. I really am a fairy, I am indeed. Didn't you see me appear?

Fog. No.

Reb. I came through that wall—right through it!

Fog. Can you disappear through it?

Reb. Certainly.

Fog. Then the sooner you do it the better.

Reb. (*going towards wall*). I think you're extremely unkind. I came simply because I thought I might be of use to you. But if you don't want me——

Fog. Stop. Are you, by any chance, in earnest?

Reb. Of course I'm in earnest; but it's the old story. Nobody believes in us nowadays. Time was when we mixed ourselves up, as a matter of course, in human business. We were a power then, and people were afraid of us. Whenever an important christening took place we were invited as a matter of course, and if any one of us was neglected, it was bad for the baby. Ah, those *were* days!

Fog. But that was some time ago. We don't associate ladies of your calling with frockcoats and trousers.

Reb. Exactly; and so our existence is reduced to a mere question of tailoring. If tights and trunks came in again, I suppose we should come in again with them.

Fog. I trust not. I *trust* not.

Reb. Why not?

Fog. Because they are not usually worn by ladies.

Reb. (*pettishly*). *Come into fashion* with them! One has to pick one's words in speaking to you, you are so matter-of-fact.

Fog. It's a matter-of-fact age.

Reb. Not particularly. Every age is matter-of-fact to those who live in it. Romance died the day before yesterday. To-day will be romantic the day after to-morrow.

Fog. Yes. Perhaps if you looked in again the day after to-morrow——

Reb. I'm speaking metaphorically. Don't be ridiculous. Now then, business. I'm your tutelary fairy.

Fog. My what?

Reb. Your tutelary fairy—your guardian genius. I hover over you—like this. (*Hovers.*) You know what I mean.

Fog. Am I to understand that you're always hovering over me when I don't know it?

Reb. Certainly.

Fog. Oh!

Reb. What's the matter?

Fog. Nothing. It's embarrassing, that's all. I wish I'd known it before! Has this hovering been going on long?

Reb. About eighteen months—ever since your engagement to Delia Spiff. The fact is I was sorry to see a fine young man throwing himself away on a ridiculous old woman, so I said to myself, "That young man's making a fool of himself; I'll keep my eye on that young man."

Fog. Oh! you know about Delia Spiff?

Reb. To be sure. We *all* know about it. It's a standing joke up in Fairyland.

Fog. Is it? It's rather a serious matter down here. But—can I offer you anything?

Reb. Thank you. I'll take a glass of sherry and a biscuit. (*He helps her. She drinks.*) Now, then, what's the difficulty?

Fog. Oh, it's about that woman; she's the bane of my life! I'm on the point of being married to a most delightful girl, and I'm expecting Spiff to turn up every moment and claim me.

Reb. Ah! I thought as much! Well, what do you want me to do? I can't strangle Delia, you know, because I'm a good fairy.

Fog. What a pity.

Reb. (*with alacrity*). Yes; but I know a bad fairy who'd do it at once if I asked her.

Fog. No, no! I don't want to hurt Delia; but if you *could* manage to marry her offhand to somebody—to Walkinshaw, for instance——

Reb. No, it would be too hard on Walkinshaw. You see I'm a good fairy! The bad fairy I was speaking about would do it with pleasure if I asked her; but it would take time, and I suppose time is precious.

Fog. It is indeed. (*Looking at his watch.*) It's very annoying, for that woman's been the curse of my existence. All my misfortunes have had their origin in my engagement to her, and if I could blot her out of my existence I should be the happiest man alive.

Reb. (*musing*). Blot her out of your existence? Well, I think I could do that for you.

Fog. (*delighted*). You could!

Reb. Ye-es (*considering*), there's no difficulty at all about that; but——

Fog. Then I'll do it!

Reb. Don't be in a hurry. Think what you're about. If you blot Delia Spiff out of your career, you blot out at the same time all the consequences that came of your having known her.

Fog. But, my good girl, that's exactly what I want to do!

Reb. Take care. The consequences of an act are often much more numerous and important than people have any idea of. Take your own case: you come of a good family, and you are proud of it.

Fog. We are the Lancashire Foggertys.

Reb. No doubt. *You* didn't do much towards it, and I don't see what you've got to be proud of; but still, proud you are.

Now you would never have been born if your father had never met your mother.

Fog. I suppose not.

Reb. And your father met your mother in this wise. Some thirty-six years ago, as he was walking down Regent Street, his attentions were directed to a sculptor's shop, in which was a remarkable monument to a Colonel Culpepper, who died of a cold caught in going into the Ganges to rescue a favourite dog which had fallen into it. An old schoolfellow passed by, and, touching your father on the shoulder, asked him to dinner. Your father went, and at the dinner met your mother, whom he eventually married. And that's how *you* came about.

Fog. I see. If my father hadn't had that invitation to dinner I should never have been born.

Reb. No doubt; but your existence is primarily due to a much more remote cause. If your father hadn't loitered opposite the sculptor's shop, his schoolfellow would never have met him. If Colonel Culpepper hadn't died, your father would never have stopped to look at his monument. If Colonel Culpepper's favourite dog had never tumbled into the Ganges, the Colonel would never have caught the cold that led to his death. If that favourite dog's father had never met that favourite dog's mother that favourite dog would never have been born, neither would *you*. And yet you're proud of your origin!

Fog. I see. I never looked at it in that light. It's humiliating, for a Lancashire Foggerty.

Reb. It *is* humiliating. Well, now you see where you are, and you can do as you like. Here is a small phial and a box of prepared pills. When you wish to eliminate a factor from your social equation, all you have to do is to express your wish and swallow the draught. When you wish to see me, all you have to do is to express your wish and swallow a pill. But take my advice, don't use it except in the last extremity. Remember, if you obliterate an act and its consequences, it's impossible to say what incidents may not have taken their place. You are pretty nearly sure to find yourself in an entirely altered state of circumstances.

Fog. I understand. But——

Reb. Yes?

Fog. There's one question I should like to ask—This is not a pantomime?

Reb. Bless the man, no.

Fog. It won't end in my being changed into Harlequin, and Jenny into Columbine, or any nonsense of that sort, will it? Because if it does——

Reb. You need not alarm yourself. This is not a Pantomime, but a very graceful and poetical Fairy Extravaganza. Rather dull, perhaps, but quite refined, and containing nothing whatever that could shock the sensibilities of the most fastidious.

Fog. That's quite sufficient. You understand the nature of my objection?

Reb. Perfectly——

Fog. It wouldn't be dignified——

Reb. I quite understand.

Fog. A Lancashire Foggerty jumping through a window!

Reb. Oh! it wouldn't do at all. Well, I must be off now, for I've got to dance second in a ballet in a fairy glen in half an hour. Remember, when you eliminate an act from your career, all its consequences, direct and indirect, are eliminated with it; so take my advice, and don't use it except in a last emergency. Where's my vampire? (*Looking around.*) Oh! —I see—thank you. (*Placing herself opposite Vampire.*) All right. Go!

[*Vampire opens. She steps into it, it closes, and she disappears. Hurried music.*

Fog. (*bewildered*). So I've a guardian spirit, have I? I'm a sort of human ward in fairy chancery, and wherever I go, and whatever I do, there's a supernatural lady always at hand, popping in upon me when I least expect it, and looking down upon me when I haven't an idea of it. It's complimentary—it's even gratifying—but it's distinctly embarrassing. I'll defy any man to feel unconstrained and at his ease when he knows that there's an invisible young woman at his elbow all day long; and as for this phial—how do I know that my position will be improved if I use it? I don't like these unknown incidents that she alludes to. There's such a thing as getting out of the frying-pan into the fire. By Jove, when I think of the difficulties and dangers with which I'm surrounded, I feel uncommonly inclined to begin at the beginning, and wish that Colonel Culpepper's favourite dog's father had remained a bachelor to the end of his days!

Enter JENNY *in wedding-dress, followed by* LOTTIE *and* TOTTIE.

Oh, here you are at last. Now let's be off.

Jenny. And haven't you a word to say about my dress?

Fog. Eh, what? Oh, beautiful, beautiful. Now, do come!

Lot. Isn't it lovely! Isn't it quite too charming?

Tot. And look at the lace! It's Venetian point. And the bouquet! and do look at the wreath! It's absolutely heavenly.

Fog. Damn the wreath!

Jenny. Oh! (*Bursts into tears.*) Oh dear! did you hear what he said?

Enter OLD TALBOT *and* WALKINSHAW, *with the other guests from garden.*

Fog. Here you are at last!

Tal. Yes, all ready. Now then. (*Sees* JENNY *crying.*) Why, what's the matter now? You've got your dress, and what more do you want?

Jenny (*crying*). Oh, papa! It's Frederick!

Tal. What has he done? Don't he like the dress?

Jenny. Yes—yes, he—he likes the dress, but—but—he damned the wreath!

Tal. (*horrified*). Foggerty, did you seriously damn that wreath?

Fog. Well, I damned it, but not seriously. It was a figure of speech.

Tal. (*to* JENNY, *who is whimpering*). There, there, you hear. It was a figure of speech. (*To the others.*) It was a poetical metaphor. A man may be allowed to indulge in a poetical metaphor on his wedding-day.

Walker. If a man may not be allowed to indulge in a poetical metaphor on his own wedding-day, on whose wedding-day *may* he?

All. Ah! (*Sighing.*)

Fogle. I cannot refrain, even at this supreme moment, from——

Fog. Stop—I know what you're going to say. I'm utterly unworthy of her. With her money, she might have done much better, and, no doubt, there's a good deal against me, if you only knew it. *That's* what you were going to say. Isn't it?

All. It is.

Fogle. That sort of thing.

Fog. Well, then, I quite agree with you. It's carried unanimously. Now, let the subject drop.

Tal. Jenny, take my arm—Uncle Fogle offer your arm to Aunt Bogle; Walker take Lottie; Balker take Tottie; Foggerty, you follow with Walkinshaw, as a matter of course. (*To all, who are looking very miserable.*) Now, my dear friends, can't you manage to get up a smile? This is not a funeral.

Aunt B. Very true. Let us all smile.

[*All smile except* WALKINSHAW, *who is scowling.*

Tal. Walkinshaw, if you don't smile you shall go home.

Jenny. Oh, Mr. Walkinshaw, pray smile, for my sake!

Wal. For *your* sake? (*Sighs, then, with an effort.*) For your sake I will! (*Assumes a forced smile.*)

Tal. That's it—capital! and whatever you do, mind you keep that up. Now, then, away we go!

[*They move towards door, when it opens, and* Miss DELIA SPIFF *enters. She is a very eccentric-looking old lady, and carries a large green umbrella.*

Miss Spiff. Stop!

All. Who is this?

Fog. (*horrified*). Delia Spiff! I knew it! I'm a ruined man!

Jenny. Why, I declare it's Aunt Delia!

All. Aunt Delia?

Miss Spiff. Yes; Aunt Spiff, arrived at Victoria Docks this morning, from Melbourne.

Jenny. Why, how fortunate! You're just in time for my wedding!

Miss Spiff. Your wedding? Whom are you going to marry?

Tal. Mr. Frederick Foggerty.

Miss Spiff. Oh, indeed!

Fog. (*confused*). Delighted, I'm sure.

Miss Spiff. (*to* FOGGERTY). Well, you're a pretty fellow, *you* are!

Jenny. Frederick is generally admired.

Miss Spiff. (*to* FOGGERTY). So I've caught you at last, have I?

Jenny. What do you mean?

Miss Spiff. That young man belongs to *me.*

All. What!

Miss Spiff. Here it is—black and white. (*Producing document.*) He admired me. I can't imagine what he saw in me to admire, but he saw something. I attracted him; he grew attentive. I fascinated him; he grew sentimental. I was coy; he proposed to me. I accepted him; he grew indifferent. I sang to him; he wearied of me. I danced before him; he fled!

Wal. Oh, Foggerty, for shame! Too bad.

Tal. (*dismally*). You needn't smile any more at present, gentlemen.

Jenny. Frederick, what does this mean?

Fog. I believe she refers to me. It's nothing. It's a figure of speech, a mere form, commonly employed by elderly Australian ladies in—in renewing a—a Platonic acquaintance. (*Relapses.*)

Tal. You hear? It's a figure of speech, a flight of metaphor—nothing more.

Walker. If an elderly Australian lady may not be allowed to

indulge in a flight of metaphor on renewing a Platonic acquaintance, who may?

Tal. To be sure. Thank you, Walker. (*To company.*) It's all right, you can smile again. (*All smile mechanically.*)

Miss Spiff. Stuff and nonsense. There ain't much metaphor about *me*. I'm a plain fact.

Fog. A hideous fact!

Jenny (*with an effort*). Aunt Delia, am I to understand that Mr. Frederick Foggerty offered marriage to you?

Miss Spiff (*indignantly*). Why, to be sure you are! What do you suppose he offered?

Jenny. It is well. I renounce him. You can go home, everybody. There will be no wedding to-day. Oh, papa, papa! to think that even *he* has loved before! (*Sobs on* TALBOT'S *breast.*)

Tal. (*to company, who have preserved their fixed smile through this*). You needn't smile now, gentlemen. (*All scowl.*)

Fog. Jenny—I haven't—I didn't—it—it was a Platonic engagement.

Miss Spiff. A Platonic fiddlestick!

Fog. Miss Spiff, you will not insist on your bond. You will be merciful! You will not dash the cup—the—dash it, the *jug* of happiness from my lips. You have a great heart, and so you will not do these things!

Miss Spiff. Won't I? Come to the altar! (*Collaring him.*)

Tal. But my good woman.

Miss Spiff. Woman yourself. (*To* FOGGERTY.) Come to joy!

Tal. Now, pray do be reasonable. Pray do let's have a little common sense.

Miss Spiff. You shall. You want it. Hark ye, sir. You are in trade?

Tal. I am. Wholesale.

Miss Spiff. So am I. Wholesale. What's *your* stock?

Tal. Mine's cheese.

Miss Spiff. Mine's charms. It's a small business. There ain't many of them, and what there are ain't much to speak of. The stock's damaged, isn't it?

Tal. Well, as for that, I can hardly be so ungallant as to admit, to a lady's face, that—that——

Miss Spiff. Stuff and nonsense. Is it damaged or is it not? Come! out with it. Yes, or no?

Tal. Well, if you put it in that way, it *is* damaged.

Miss Spiff. Not the sort of goods that one can get off one's hands every day in the week?

Tal. Oh, I don't say that. I can quite understand, for

instance, that a snug, elderly gentleman, with a comfortable independence, would——

Miss Spiff (*abruptly*). Will *you* have me?

Tal. (*taken aback*). God bless me, no!

Miss Spiff. Of course you wouldn't, and you're right. *I* wouldn't if I was you. Well, I've had a bid from that ridiculous young man. I knocked myself down to him and he fled.

Fog. (*on the sofa, feebly*). In all cases of dispute the goods to be put up again and knocked down to the highest bidder.

Miss Spiff. But there ain't any dispute. Here it is—black and white. (*Producing document.*) "I, Frederick Foggerty, agree to marry you, Delia Spiff," and so on. I had it stamped. Business.

Fog. Jenny, once more, save me from this catastrophe! After all, you are rich, and it's a mere question of compensation!

Jenny. Away, sir! I regard you with horror! You have deceived a trusting young heart!

Miss Spiff. And a suspicious old one!

Aunt Bogle. Go, viper! We expected something of this sort.

Tal. But——

Miss Spiff. Come to the altar—come to joy. (*Collaring* FOGGERTY.)

Tal. This is most exasperating—on a festive occasion! Confound you, why didn't you turn up before, ma'am? That wedding-dress wasn't made under twenty pounds, and it's wasted! Then there's the breakfast, and the carriages, and a new pair of trousers bought expressly for the occasion!

Miss Spiff. Don't distress yourself. I'll take them off your hands.

Tal. They're not on my hands—they're on my legs, and I won't have them taken off on any account!

Miss Spiff (*to* FOGGERTY). Now, sir, are you ready?

Fog. Talbot, won't you say a word for me? Uncle Fogle, Aunt Bogle, Lottie, Tottie, Walker, Balker?

[*All turn from him.*

Uncle Fogle. Not a word, sir. We felt sure of this all along, but, from motives of delicacy, we didn't *say* so. We confined ourselves to *thinking* it.

Lot. We consider that Jenny has had a most fortunate escape.

Tot. And we hope it will be a lesson to you for the future.

Fog. It's all over. I'm lost! Lead me away!

Miss Spiff. Come to joy!

Fog. Stop! The draught! Rebecca's draught! I forgot that! Matters couldn't look worse than they are. It's a

desperate remedy, but it's my only way out of it! *(Staggers.)* Oh! oh! Help! I'm fainting!

Jenny. Gracious, he's fainting.

[*They wheel the sofa.* JENNY *rushes to him and supports him; he struggles to loosen his collar.*

Miss Spiff. Fainting? Here's a pin. Prick him.

Jenny (to MISS SPIFF). You brute! The eau-de-cologne—quick!

Fog. My tie, undo it! My waistcoat! Give me air! give me water! Quick! quick! Water—water—water! *(Gasping, and kicking violently, on sofa.)*

Jenny (in great distress). Oh, give him water—give him water, somebody!

[WALKINGSHAW *has poured out a glass of water and handed it to him. Slow music to end of act.*

Fog. (rising and deliberately pouring the contents of the phial into the glass of water). Ladies and gentlemen, I deliberately wish that my acquaintance with Miss Spiff, and all its consequences, may henceforward be blotted out of my existence!

[*They all fall back in astonishment as* FOGGERTY *drinks. He falls insensible on sofa. All group round him as he falls. Picture.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*A handsomely furnished back drawing-room in Harley Street. A wedding-bouquet on table.* FOGGERTY *is discovered asleep on a sofa. Enter* FAIRY REBECCA *through trap in stage.*

Reb. (looking at FOGGERTY). Well, it's about time to wake him. Poor fellow, he little thinks how materially his acquaintance with Miss Spiff has affected his subsequent adventures! Now that he has obliterated her and all the complicated consequences that came of his having known her, he won't know whether he's on his head or his heels. I'm really rather sorry for him. However, I mustn't allow sentiment to interfere with duty. It's time to wake him, so here goes.

[*Waves wand.* FOGGERTY *yawns, stretches himself and wakes.*

Fog. (half awake). Hallo! I've been asleep. *(Yawns.)*

Dreaming too! What queer things dreams are! I dreamt that a Fairy appeared to me and gave me an ounce bottle, and told me that if I swallowed the contents—— (*Sees the phial in his hand.*) Hallo! steady man, steady—pull yourself together! Why, as I am alive, here it is. The very one. (*Reads direction label.*) "To obliterate a circumstance, take two tea-spoonfuls in a glass of water." Then it couldn't have been a dream! I remember it all now. I was on the point of being married to Jenny—and Spiff turned up—and I determined to blot out Spiff—and I suppose I *have* blotted her out (*looking round*); at all events she isn't here. (*Sees* REBECCA). Hallo!

Reb. Hallo!

Fog. Well! Here we are again!

Reb. Yes, here we are again.

Fog. So Spiff's blotted out?

Reb. Yes; Spiff's done with; no more Spiff.

Fog. No chance of her coming back—eh?

Reb. None whatever. Your acquaintance with Spiff and all its consequences are blotted out of your existence.

Fog. Come, that's something. But I don't know this room. Where am I?

Reb. You're where you would have been if you'd never known Spiff.

Fog. Of course I am; but where's that?

Reb. Can't tell, I'm sure.

Fog. Don't you know?

Reb. I don't say I don't know; I only say I can't tell.

Fog. Doesn't it occur to you that for a guardian spirit you take a rather airy and, if I may so express myself, philosophical view of your duties?

Reb. A guardian spirit? Oh, I'm not your guardian spirit now.

Fog. The deuce you're not?

Reb. Oh dear, no; that's all over—wiped out with Spiff.

Fog. And *why* wiped out with Spiff?

Reb. You will recollect that I became your guardian spirit because I was sorry to see a fine young man throw himself away upon such an old scarecrow as Spiff.

Fog. Well?

Reb. But as you haven't thrown yourself away upon Spiff, the occasion for my services hasn't arisen. You see you never knew Spiff.

Fog. Oh. May I ask if any other friends have been Spiffed out.

Reb. Once more, I'm not at liberty to say. (*Going to trap.*) You'll excuse me, I'm sure.

Fog. But you're not going without giving me some clue to my position?

Reb. I must; I can't help you, you must find it all out for yourself. I'm due at a Transformation Scene to change a respectable young plumber and a good plain cook into Harlequin and Columbine, and the gas is a serious item. I'm sorry I can't be of any further service to you; but, you see, I'm Spiffed out! Good morning. (*On trap.*) Go!

[*She stamps her foot and disappears through trap.*

Fog. (*in bewilderment*). But, here, I say! I've no idea where I am, or who I am, or how I'm here, or whose house this is, and how I came into it—or, for that matter, whose trousers these are, and how I came into *them!* What am I to do? I can't go about asking people if they'll kindly tell me who I am, or if they'll be so obliging as to inform me where I live, or what I did yesterday, or what I've arranged to do to-morrow; they'd take me for a lunatic! And Jenny, how about Jenny? is *she* Spiffed out? No, no. I knew her long before I knew Spiff. So that can't be. Now, let me see. I was on the point of being married to Jenny when Spiff turned up and prevented the marriage. But Spiff's obliterated. So, of course the marriage went on, and of course I'm married to Jenny. By-the-by, I wonder if I've been married to her long? I hope not. When you're head over ears in love with a girl, as I was with Jenny, it's disappointing to go to sleep and wake up and find that you've been married to her ever so long, and got tired of her, as I'll be bound I have of Jenny. (*Finds a letter in his pocket.*) Hallo! Here's a letter. It's addressed to me—and opened! Now, who the deuce has dared to open letters addressed to me? Oh! I suppose *I* did. I don't recollect doing it, but that doesn't seem to signify. (*Reads.*) "Dearest, take heart." Hallo! this is not Jenny's hand! (*Resumes.*) "Dearest, take heart. Situated as we are towards one another, I do not think it would be quite prudent in me to call upon you." No, I should think not! "Nevertheless, in the course of to-morrow, I hope to be in a position to remove, for ever, the crushing load of anxiety under which you have so long laboured." That's all! No signature. Humph! It seems that I'm infernally anxious about something; it would be convenient to know what it is. I'll ask Jenny. But, stop a moment, perhaps Jenny doesn't know of this letter. Now, I wonder if she knows of it. I'll be bound she *doesn't* know of it. There's something about this letter—I don't know what

—but something—that suggests that in all probability I shouldn't have shown it to her. Humph! I am extremely sorry to say that, notwithstanding the strictness of my principles, circumstances seem to point to the fact that I've been going it.

Enter LOTTIE *and* TOTTIE *in the bonnets and dresses they wore in Act I.*

Lot. Oh, Mr. Foggerty!

Fog. Lottie! Tottie! I'm delighted to see you. I'm delighted to find that *you're* not Spiffed out.

Tot. Not Spiffed out? Oh, but we flatter ourselves that we *are* spiffed out; at all events, we've got our best dresses on.

Lot. I should think so; on this day of all others.

Fog. Of course; but I didn't mean that. Never mind. (*Aside.*) Now, by a judicious course of pumping, I shall find out exactly how I'm situated. (*Aloud.*) Well, what is it?

Tot. A lady has sent this up (*giving card*), and says she must see you at once.

Fog. (*looking at card*). Malvina de Vere! I don't know Malvina de Vere.

Lot. Oh, that's nonsense. She says you are her dearest friend.

Fog. Oh, absurd!

Lot. Well, that's what she *says*.

Fog. The deuce she does! (*Aside.*) Now, this must be some one whom I *should* have known, if I hadn't known Spiff—some one, in fact, who's been Spiffed out. This is awkward. I wonder if Jenny knows of this? (*Aloud.*) By-the-by, where is Jenny?

Lot. Jenny? Oh, she's upstairs, poor girl.

Fog. (*aside*). "Poor girl?" Why "poor girl," I wonder? (*Aloud.*) Ah, poor girl! How is she by this time?

Tot. Oh, pretty well.

Fog. *Pretty* well? Not very well?

Tot. Why, you can hardly expect her to be very well, on this day of all others.

Fog. Naturally. (*Aside.*) I wonder what day of all others this is?

Lot. But still she is as well as can be expected.

Fog. As well as—— (*Aside.*) I see where I am now. I've been married some time, and—I wonder if it's a boy or

a girl! It would be ridiculous to ask. I'll go and see her. (*Going.*)

Tot. Where are you going?

Fog. Going? Why, to see Jenny, of course.

Tot. Oh, you can't possibly see *her*, she's dressing.

Fog. Well, what of that?

Lot. Upon my word, Mr. Foggerty,

Tot. You can't go up to her; you must really wait till she comes down.

Fog. Oh, she is well enough to come down, is she?

Lot. What a question; and on this day of all others! Of course she is.

Fog. Exactly; on this day of all others. (*Aside*). What does she mean by "this day of all others"?

Tot. It's a day *I* never expected to see.

Fog. Didn't you? Bless me, I knew all about it from the first.

Lot. When one thinks of all the circumstances of the case, one sees how true it is that truth is stranger than fiction.

Tot. Oh, what a novel it would make! Only think. The young and penniless apothecary who had never known what love was—

Lot. The wholesale cheesemonger's daughter—

Tot. Their meeting—the dawn of love in the apothecary's heart—

Lot. The opposition of the cruel and mercenary parent—

Tot. Her determination to wed the apothecary at all hazards—

Lot. Everything at a dead lock! Then the discovery of the pill—

Tot. At midnight—

Lot. Its sudden renown—

Tot. The pill in everybody's mouth—

Lot. Stupendous fortune realized by the inventor in no time. All opposition removed, and they're to be married to-day!

Fog. (*who has been looking from one to the other in bewildered wonderment during this dialogue*). To-day!

Lot. Of course! The successful young apothecary and the cheesemonger's lovely daughter are to be united to-day.

Fog. (*aside*). To-day! (*Aloud.*) But I thought you said she was as well as could be expected?

Lot. Well, so I did, and so she is.

Tot. Bless the man, she's nervous and excited, of course, but she's not too ill to be married.

Lot. I should think *not*, indeed: one must be bad for *that!*

[*Exeunt* LOTTIE *and* TOTTIE, *laughing.*

Fog. Then I'm not married after all, and, what's more, I'm to be married to-day! Why, of course, here's the wedding-bouquet? I see it all now. I've invented a pill, the pill's taken—I'm a man of fortune—and the wedding is to take place from my house. Why, with a little tact—a little judicious pumping—how easy it all is. By-the-by, I wonder where I live? (*Looks out of window.*) Harley Street! Of course it's Harley Street. A man who invents a successful pill always does live in Harley Street! But this lady—my dearest friend on earth. That's awkward—on one's wedding-day. I can't imagine anything more awkward—on one's wedding-day. Does Jenny know of this? I'll be bound Jenny does *not* know of this. There's something about this lady's method—I don't know what—that convinces me that I shouldn't have told Jenny anything about her. Foggerty, my boy, I'm extremely sorry to say that circumstances point to the fact that you've been going it!

Enter MISS DE VERE. *She is a tall, stately lady of middle age and tragical demeanour. She stands at the door for a moment—gazes at him melodramatically—then rushes to his arms.*

Miss de V. Frederick! At last! at last! (*Gazes at him fondly.*)

Fog. (*aside*). She's a bosom friend—no doubt about *that!* (*Aloud, and much embarrassed.*) I—a—have much pleasure in——

Miss de V. Don't speak, not yet (*gazing at him*), not yet, I entreat you! Let me drink you in!

Fog. Certainly. Be so obliging as to say when you've had enough.

Miss de V. There—I'm satisfied.

Fog. (*aside*). I wish *I* was.

Miss de V. Now speak to me! Oh! my love! My tender tender love! Speak to me as you used to speak to me—call me by the name by which you used to call me!

Fog. Really—— (*Aside.*) By George, I *have* been going it!

Miss de V. The old, old name—the pet name of so many happy memories—oh, call me by it, call me by it!

Fog. Certainly; I—(*refers to visiting card*) I believe I have the—a—pleasure of addressing Miss de Vere?

Miss de V. Miss de Vere! (*Drawing herself back in great*

surprise.) Miss de Vere? Why, what means this? Why this extraordinary coolness, why this chilling formality—and on this day of all others?

Fog. I beg your pardon, but you took me so completely by surprise.

Miss de V. By surprise? Have you forgotten my note, and your reply to it? Read it, sir, read it. (*Gives him a note.*)

Fog. With very great pleasure. (*Aside.*) Now I shall find out that infernal pet name. (*Reads.*) "My own." That's all. (*Disappointed.*) I hate a fellow who calls a girl "his own." (*Reads.*) "I recognize the propriety of your scruples in the particularly delicate relation in which we stand towards each other. But I implore you to come and see me to-morrow morning, nevertheless." There, you see it says "*to-morrow* morning."

Miss de V. This *is* to-morrow morning.

Fog. Nonsense, that can't be, that's ridiculous. (*Refers to note.*) Oh, I see, it was dated yesterday.

Miss de V. And now, sir, before I proceed to that extreme measure to which I have been unhappily so frequently compelled to resort, perhaps you will be so good as to explain and satisfactorily account for the extraordinary coldness of your reception.

Fog. My coldness? Oh, that was my scrupulous regard for the respect due to you in the particularly delicate relation in which we stand to one another.

Miss de V. It was?

Fog. It was. Miss de Vere, I find it hard, very hard to continue this assumption of indifference to you; but I am proud—I am *proud* to say, that my better man is triumphant.

Miss de V. I see! I understand it all!

Fog. (*aside*). Then, by George, you've the advantage of me!

Miss de V. You will forgive the undeserved reproaches with which in my jealous madness I dared to assail you?

Fog. Say no more about them—they are pardoned.

Miss de V. Why, what a mad fool was I!

Fog. You were—I mean no—not at all. (*Aside.*) I wish she'd go.

Miss de V. But I have been so often the victim of heartless and systematic treachery!

Fog. Have you?

Miss de V. Why, you know I have.

Fog. So I do—of course—I know you have! Poor girl, poor girl! When I think of your sad story——

Miss de V. Ah! it *is* a sad story!

Fog. I know it is. (*Aside.*) *That's* a sad story! (*Aloud.*) But, bless me, it's eleven o'clock, and I've a most important engagement in half an hour, and I'm not dressed. Will you excuse me?

Miss de V. Oh, by all means.

Fog. I suppose my dressing-room's upstairs?

Miss de V. Really, Mr. Foggerty, I don't know where your dressing-room is!

Fog. No, of course not. How should you?

Miss de V. Exactly. How should I? But won't you say farewell to me before you go?

Fog. With great pleasure. But, at the same time, in accordance with the pledge contained in that letter, I must firmly resist the temptation to address you by that old pet name of happy memories, until the relations between us have become more indelicate—that is to say, less delicate than they are.

Miss de V. It is nobly spoken; it is like your heroic self. But you *are* anxious, are you not? You *do* burn with a feverish anxiety to hear the word that is to be spoken this afternoon?

Fog. Miss de Vere, I assure you, on the honour of a Lancashire Foggerty, that I am tormented with a fidgety anxiety on an infinite number of topics, and on that among others! Good morning. [*Exit.*

Miss de V. He is gone! How strange and incoherent his manner—how wild and flighty his eye! Oh, mercy on me! can it be that he, too, is false to me? Can it be that I shall be once more driven to resort to the last and hated means of vindicating my rights? No, no—I'll not believe it—and yet—(*Sees breakfast in back room.*) Why, what is this? By the God of Treachery it is a wedding-feast! Whose? Oh, impossible! and yet, his strange embarrassment—his evasive hesitation! Oh, misery—oh, misery, if it should be! Why, what a cursed thing am I? What have I done that this blight should fall on me wherever I go? Why does Infidelity dog my path, while the serpent Treachery lifts his head on high and hisses forth a loud ha! ha! Oh, ye Fate-hags three; soul torturers, my defiance to ye all! The fight is betwixt ye and me, and I am not made of the stuff that yields.

Enter JENNY *in wedding-dress, as in Act I.*

Jenny. There, I think I look lovely! (*Sees* MISS DE VERE.) A lady!

Miss de V. (*aside, with emotion*). It is the bride! Down, down, my heart! (*Aloud.*) Fear not, pretty one; I am but Malvina de Vere—a very sorrowful lady.

Jenny. I am sorry you are sorrowful.

Miss de V. (*with an effort*). And you—you are the bride in whose honour these festive preparations have been made?

Jenny (*sighing*). Yes, I'm to be married to-day. How do you like my dress?

Miss de V. It is very well—it is very well. (*Aside.*) How my heart throbs! Down, little one; I must appear calm, and I cannot do so while you beat so rapidly. (*Aloud.*) You—you are about to be married to Mr. Foggerty?

Jenny. To Mr. Foggerty? Oh dear, no! What could have put such an idea into your head?

Miss de V. You are *not* going to marry Mr. Foggerty?

Jenny. Assuredly not! He is my husband's best man.

Miss de V. (*relieved*). It is well—it is very well! (*Aside.*) Little heart, you hear?

Jenny. You seem agitated! Can I offer you anything?

Miss de V. I *am* agitated, young bride. I—I can never gaze upon a wedding garb without remembering that I, who am a simple maiden still, might, but for man's perfidy, have been, ere this, a grandmamma.

Jenny. Have they been deceiving you?

Miss de V. Deceiving me? Eighteen times have I stood dauntlessly at matrimony's verge. Eighteen times my coward victim—that is to say, my betrothed—has quailed and fled! He, man in name, blanched at the very danger that I courted.

Jenny. That's so like them! And you, what did you do?

Miss de V. I took the only course that open to me lay. Eighteen times I offered up my bleeding heart a sacrifice at Themis' sympathetic shrine. Eighteen times did I lay bare its holiest workings, and call on all to come and gaze upon its palpitating pulp. And in each case I recovered substantial damages.

Jenny. You did nobly! And the nineteenth?

Miss de V. His fate is yet uncertain. For many months have I lost sight of him. Yet have I heard within the last few weeks that he is also false and seeks another bride.

Jenny. Oh, poor lady!

Miss de V. It matters little—there's a twentieth in the field, whose exquisitively sensitive regard for my most difficult and delicate position falls scarcely short of the phenomenal; but, ere I yield me to his ardent prayers, I must in honour

satisfy myself that my nineteenth is false. This afternoon the problem will be solved.

Jenny. My heart bleeds for you, sad and gentle lady. But whither go you now?

Miss de V. I scarce can say! To wander up and down and to and fro, restless as a caged panther in his den, until the double-barrelled news is brought that I am free to love and bring my action!

Jenny. Nay, but I'll not consign you to the mercies of the inhospitable street. This is *my* house, or shortly will be so; pray rest you here, and when the solemn ceremony is over, we pray you join our merry-making, and in wild delirium of the breakfast forget the harrowing trouble at your heart.

Miss de V. I thank you, maiden, for your sympathy. I'll not refuse the shelter that you proffer.

Jenny. You'll find my boudoir on the two-pair-back. So, for the nonce, farewell! May justice pour her balm upon your heart!

Miss de V. She has, my dear, in every other case, and, doubtless, will in this. Once more, farewell. [*Exit.*

Jenny (*looking after her*). Poor lady, with what a touching dignity she bears her many disappointments! Her sad, sad tale touches me to the heart, for I, too, have loved, but vainly. Oh, how I loved him—and he knew it not! But there—I may not think of *him*—henceforth I may think only of my Theodore!

Enter WALKINSHAW.

Wal. Jenny! my own! at last—at last my own!

Jenny. Oh, Theodore—indifferent to me in all else, but interesting to me inasmuch as I am the only woman who ever kindled the fire of love within your heart, be true to me, be true to me!

Wal. Be true to you? While life lasts!

Jenny. And you do love me?

Wal. Love you? Haven't I settled the pill upon you?

Jenny. Yes, yes; you have been most generous. I am the only one; am I not?

Wal. The only one, in truth.

Jenny. And you have never known the throb of love?

Wal. Until you taught it me!

Jenny. It is something; nay, it is much. For you, my Theodore, I have no love, nor have I ever told you that I had; but I esteem you, Theodore, I respect you.

Wal. Oh, rapture! But you are sad.

Jenny. Oh, Theodore, a lady has been here, such a sad, sad lady! so tearful yet so calm—so calm and yet so woebegone—so woebegone and yet so dignified! Eighteen times has that poor lady been thrown over.

Wal. Thrown over where?

Jenny. And even now she has reason to believe that the nineteenth is trifling with her feelings!

Wal. (*in great terror*). Bless my soul. What's her name?

Jenny. Her very name is Poetry and Soul!

Wal. Oh, then, I don't know her. (*Much relieved.*) It sounds like a firm.

Jenny. She is called Malvina de Vere.

Wal. (*horrified—aside*). It's she. If she finds me at home, she'll find me out. I'm ruined. (*Aloud.*) Where is she?

Jenny. Sobbing her heart out in the two-pair-back.

Wal. In my house?

Jenny. In yours and mine. Poor tortured soul; she waits a wire from her solicitor.

Wal. (*much agitated*). Jenny, I—I have heard of this lady. She—she is not altogether worthy of your sympathy——

Jenny. What!!! How dare you, sir!

Wal. She—she lives on actions for breach. She engages herself to an unsuspecting young man—makes herself intentionally unpleasant. Her lover can't stand her, and breaks it off—and she immediately brings an action.

Jenny. Oh, shame on you to dare in my presence—in the presence of your wife that is to be—to palliate the conduct of a wretch who makes unpleasantness a ground for violating the troth that he has plighted! Oh, shame upon you—shame upon you!

Wal. But, Jenny, I——

Enter FOGGERTY *dressed for wedding, and sticking flower in buttonhole.*

Fog. There—that's very nice. It's wonderful how a judiciously applied vegetable sets a man off. That'll do, I think. Now if I can only find some one who will give me a clue to—— (*Sees* WALKINSHAW). Walkinshaw my boy, *you* here!

Wal. Certainly I am.

Fog. The very last man I expected to see, I give you my unadulterated word of honour! (*Shaking hands enthusiastically.*)

Wal. The last man?

Fog. The very last, I assure you. I'm more delighted than I can tell you!

Wal. Why? It's hardly likely that I should be absent on this day of all others!

Fog. Well, it's very friendly of you to say so. I won't forget it, Walkinshaw, depend upon it. Will you take anything? Do! Make yourself at home, you know. This is Liberty Hall. (*Sees* JENNY.) Jenny! at last! my own Jenny! Why, how superb you look, and to think that in half an hour—— (*Kisses her.*)

Jenny (*surprised*). Mr. Foggerty!

Fog. And now, tell me how you've been all this time—and what you've been doing—and, in short, tell me all about it.

Jenny. All about what? (*He kisses her.*) Don't!

Fog. But I must—I'm so happy, so overpoweringly and stupendously happy! (*Kisses her again—she rises offended.*)

Wal. (*aside*). I wish Jenny wouldn't let Foggerty kiss her so much; of course it's all right, because they've known each other as children; but still I wish he wouldn't do it! She doesn't let *me*, and I don't see why she should let him.

[FOGGERTY, *who has been paying attention to* JENNY *during this, attempts to kiss her.*

Jenny. Mr. Foggerty, you mustn't really. I'm astonished at you!

Wal. He's overdoing it; upon my soul he is!

Fog. Pooh, pooh! nonsense; on this day of all others. (*Kisses her again*).

Wal. (*aside*). I can't stand this. (*Aloud*). I say, Foggerty, of course it's all right. I know how you and Jenny are situated—but still I think—I *think*, on this day of all others——

Fog. (*surprised*). What do you mean?

Wal. There's too much of it, my boy. I'd leave off if I were you—I would, indeed!

Fog. No, you wouldn't, Walkinshaw, you jealous dog! (*Aside.*) Poor devil, he hasn't got over his attachment to her yet, and it *is* rather rough on him.

Wal. Kissing her under my very nose——

Fog. Not under *your* very nose—under *her* very nose. Ha! ha! But, don't distress yourself, it shan't occur again.

Wal. You're overdoing it, my boy.

Fog. Well, perhaps I am.

Wal. I'm sure you are.

Fog. I agree with you—it's not delicate.

Wal. It's d——d indelicate.

Fog. Yes, on this day of all others!

Wal. Exactly; on this day of all others!

Fog. Then say no more about it. Take one yourself.

Wal. Oh, we're in no hurry; *we* can wait.

Jenny (*sighing*). Ah, yes, we can wait!

Fog. The deuce you can?

Wal. Yes; you see we've plenty of time before us.

Jenny (*sighing*). Plenty!

Fog. (*aside*). Plenty of time before them? Now, what do they mean by *that?*

Wal. Well, it's about time we were off. Let's see, are we all here? There's Uncle Fogle and Aunt Bogle for the first carriage, and Lottie and Tottie, and Walker and Balker, and your papa and my mamma—and—yes, we're quite complete. I'll get them all packed off, and then come back for you.

[*Exit* WALKINSHAW.

Fog. Jenny, I don't like Walkinshaw's manner.

Jenny. His manner *is* unfortunate, but you mustn't be too hard on him; he's nervous and agitated.

Fog. I can understand that; but still I don't like it, Jenny, I don't like it.

Jenny. Oh, you *must* make allowance for him, and on this day of all others.

Fog. Well, poor devil, I suppose he's more to be pitied than blamed.

Jenny. Pitied! Well, I'm sure.

Fog. Yes, pitied. Now, Jenny, it's no use affecting surprise. I can see as far through a millstone as most people, and, mark my words, that man's in love with you.

Jenny. Of course he is!

Fog. Oh, you've noticed it?

Jenny (*surprised*). Noticed it? Why, of course I've noticed it!

Fog. Then I say he's very much to be pitied—he has a dismal prospect before him.

Jenny. Upon my word, Mr. Foggerty!

Fog. Life a blank, every hope crushed, every fond illusion wiped out, nothing before him but a melancholy prime, a blighted sere-and-yellow, and a solitary and desolate old age. Poor Walkinshaw!

Jenny. How dare you say these things to me?

Fog. Eh?

Jenny. I say how dare you? From this moment I devote myself, heart and soul, to his happiness; it shall be my only care, my only thought!

Fog. The devil you will!

Jenny. I will, I swear it! It will be my duty, and my duty I will do!

Fog. It seems to me that you take an exceedingly comprehensive view of your duty! Look here, Jenny; let's understand one another. (*Sits by her, puts his arm round her waist.*) I know you're as good a girl as ever stepped. Still——

Jenny. Frederick—Mr. Foggerty—you mustn't!

Fog. Mustn't what?

Jenny. Put your arm round my waist.

Fog. Well, it *is* round your waist.

Jenny (*struggling*). But I say you mustn't.

Fog. Why not? Walkinshaw can't see.

Jenny. That has nothing to do with it. I won't allow it, because it's not right—on this day of all others!

Fog. Indeed? I should have thought if ever there *was* a day on which I might be permitted to take such an innocent freedom, this day of all others is the day.

Jenny (*crying*). How dare you say such things to me! It is most unkind to me, and most unfair to your friend.

Fog. My friend? Oh, Walkinshaw! I tell you he can't see.

Jenny. I don't care, it's most unfair to him.

Fog. It seems to me you've a remarkably tender regard for Walkinshaw's feelings!

Jenny. Certainly I have. As you know, I don't pretend that I love him.

Fog. Well, I should hope not!

Jenny. I mean as a wife is expected to love her husband.

Fog. Yes, that's what *I* mean!

Jenny. Yet I have a sincere regard for him, and, be assured of this, I shall always respect his privileges.

Fog. Upon my word, ma'am, situated as I am——

Jenny. Yes, I know, you were my childhood's friend; but that only makes it all the more dreadful, and sincerely as I esteem *you*, I must tell you at once that if ever you presume to attempt the slightest, very slightest, familiarity with me, except in Mr. Walkinshaw's presence, I shall give directions that you are never to be admitted into the house again!

Fog. (*utterly aghast*). But, Jenny, listen for one moment.

Jenny. It's useless, Frederick. It's best to begin as we mean to go on.

Fog. Oh! Don't you think you'd better *marry* Walkinshaw at once?

Jenny. Yes, we shall be too late if we don't start very soon.

Fog. (*furious*). I say, don't you think you'd better marry Walkinshaw—*Walkinshaw*—at once?

Jenny. I say yes, I do. I can't imagine what's detaining him.

Fog. (*bewildered*). Jenny! Jenny! (*Suddenly.*) Great Heavens! (*Springs horrified to his feet.*)

Jenny. What's the matter? You are ill—some water—quick—quick.

Fog. (*gasping*). Jenny—attend to me! Am I to understand that you are really—going—to—marry Walkinshaw?

[*During this she has loosened his necktie, and dabbed a wet handkerchief on his temples, as he leans tottering against a table.*

Jenny. How can you ask such a ridiculous question?

Fog. No, but are you? Answer me, yes or no. Are you?

Jenny. Am I? You know I am.

Fog. You are? (*Overpowered.*)

Jenny. Of course; don't be absurd.

Fog. (*wildly*). But don't marry him! For Heaven's sake don't marry him! Jenny, you shan't, you can't! I won't stand by and see it done! Oh, Jenny, Jenny, whom I love so deeply! (*Sobbing.*)

Jenny. Mr. Foggerty, you amaze me!

Fog. (*surprised*). Amaze you? Why, you know I love you!

Jenny. I? Indeed, I know nothing of the kind!

Fog. Why, I've told you over and over again!

Jenny. You have told *me* so? Never!

Fog. How can you say that? Didn't I propose, and didn't you accept me, and weren't we engaged, and—stop. No, no. (*Aside.*) I'm mixing it all up again!

Jenny (*in blank astonishment*). Oh, you must have dreamt all this!

Fog. Exactly, that's it. I must have dreamt it. But did I *never* tell you that I loved you?

Jenny (*weeping*). Oh no, no, no. Why didn't you? Why didn't you?

Fog. I don't know. I—I suppose I forgot to mention it.

Jenny (*wildly*). Oh, if I had only known—if I had only known!

Fog. (*excitedly*). Then—you loved me?

Jenny (*horrified*). What have I said?

Fog. You did! You do? You can't deny it! You shan't deny it! You loved me, madly, passionately—how could you help it?

Jenny. Frederick—in mercy spare me! It is cruel, cruel to say such things to me, just as I am on the point of marrying another man!

Fog. But *don't* marry another man! He's unworthy of you—I'm not! I love you desperately—he doesn't! I'll do so

all my life—he won't! He *can* live without you—I can't! I *shall* go mad if you don't have me—he shan't! Tell Walkinshaw to go and hang himself—he won't mind—he's a good-natured fellow, and he'll do it, if you say it's for me.

Jenny. Impossible! I could not tell him to go and do that. Oh, it is too late—too late! Oh, Frederick, why, *why* didn't you tell me this before?

Fog. (*wildly*). I don't know! There's my difficulty! Situated as I am, it's impossible to say. I thought I had. But it seems I hadn't. No doubt there's a reason for it if one only knew what it was—but one don't! I hope I'm clear?

Jenny (*drying her eyes*). Not very, but any way it is too late now. The clergyman is at this moment waiting impatiently to unite me to Theodore Walkinshaw. I regard him with a wondering respect as one whose heart had never throbbed with love until I taught it to. But *love* him? No! I do not love him! After what you have elicited from me it would be worse than affectation to deny that my heart has long been yours, and, but for your unaccountable silence, we might have been happy. As it is, Frederick, we must never, never meet again. I embark on my married life with a bruised and broken heart. Farewell, for ever! [*Exit* JENNY.

Fog. (*wildly*). Jenny, Jenny, come back! Gone, gone from me for ever! To be knitted to Walkinshaw; and the poor child is fond of me, has been for years, ever since we were children! What was I about not to have seen it? Why didn't I tell her I adored her? That's just where it is! I don't know! I haven't the ghost of an idea! I see it all now! If I had never known Spiff, I should never have bolted from her to Jenny—never have interfered with Walkinshaw, whose courtship would have gone on swimmingly, and culminated in matrimony, as it's going to do to-day. And all this heart-breaking misery, this preposterous coupling of ill-assorted souls, this whirling chaos of discordant sympathies, is the consequence of the ill-omened matrimonial arrangements of Colonel Culpepper's favourite dog's father!

[*Throws himself on sofa, and buries his head in pillow.*

(*Enter* WALKINSHAW *and* OLD TALBOT.)

Tal. Come, come, *are* we all ready? Then let's be off. Where's Foggerty?

Wal. Foggerty? Oh, here he is, on the sofa.

Tal. What's the matter with him! Isn't he well?

Wal. (*aside to* TALBOT). Well, the fact is, I lost my temper with him just now, and it's upset him, but I'll make it all right. (*Goes to him*). Foggerty, my boy, come, come, cheer up, I didn't mean to speak unkindly to you; but really——

Fog. (*without turning round*). Oh, go, sir, go!

Wal. Come, come, be reasonable, if *you* caught a fellow kissing the girl you loved—what would you do?

Fog. (*wildly*). What would I do? Shall I show you what I would do? I'd fly at him. Thus! (*Flying at* WALKINSHAW.) I'd shake him—thus! (*Shaking him violently, and driving him down to proscenium.*) I'd throttle him—thus! (*Knocks him about wildly,* WALKINSHAW *quite limp and helpless in his hands.*) I'd say, "Give her back to me you traitor! You double-dyed villian! You slayer of hopes! You assassin of hearts!" There! (*Flinging him violently on the stage.*) That's what I'd do!

Wal. (*all of a heap and breathless on the floor, and much disordered in dress*). I see, thank you! I—I think you would be justified.

Tal. Dear! dear! (*Helping Walkinshaw up, and re-arranging his hair and cravat.*) Foggerty, this is not pretty behaviour towards a bridegroom on his wedding-day!

Fog. Pretty behaviour! And you, infamous old traitor. Would you like to see what I would do to a scheming father who first gives me his daughter and then hands her over to somebody else. (*Shaking him violently.*)

Tal. (*bewildered*). It would be interesting, of course. Perhaps if you illustrated on Walkinshaw I should see it better than if you did it to me.

[*All three with their costumes and hair very much disarranged.*

Fog. Walkinshaw! After all I have done for him, to rob me of the only girl I ever loved!

Tal. You loved my girl?

Wal. Did you love Jenny?

Fog. (*sarcastically*). Did I love Jenny? Do you think I should have been engaged to her if I hadn't?

Tal. Engaged to her!

Fog. Engaged to her? Yes! Oh, I forgot; that's all been spiffed out! I've been mixing again!

Tal. Upon my soul I think you have! And pretty freely too!

Fog. There, don't mind me; don't take any notice of what I say! Give me air, or I shall choke! (*Staggers on to balcony.*)

Tal. and Wal. (*together*). I say, doesn't it strike you——

Tal. I beg your pardon——

Wal. I beg yours.

Tal. After you!

Wal. Not at all!

Tal. I was going to say, doesn't it strike you that there's something very incoherent in Foggerty's manner?

Wal. The very thing I was going to say to you!

Tal. Mark my words; he's mad!

Wal. Staring mad!

Tal. It's an awful thing!

Wal. Appalling!

Tal. Glass of wine?

Wal. With pleasure! (*They take wine together.*)

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. Stop!

Tal. But we can't be always stopping—what's the matter now?

Jenny. This wedding—it must not take place!

Tal and Wal. (*together*). Mustn't take place.

Wal. Jenny, what in the world do you mean?

Jenny. Stand off, sir! Do not dare to approach me! I regard you with contempt and loathing unutterable.

Tal. and Wal. (*together*). Jenny!

Jenny. Approach me not, I say! You have trifled with my most sacred feelings! You have outraged my tenderest sensibilities. I regard you as a snaky and systematic serpent—and thus—and thus—I extricate myself from your slimy toils. (*Tears license.*)

Tal. Oh, Jenny, Jenny, this is not pretty behaviour to your husband on his wedding-day!

Jenny. Pretty behaviour! Do you know that man!

Tal. Know him? Yes, very well!

Jenny. You know his smooth and plausible outside—but his inside—do you know *that?*

Tal. Really, my dear, I'm not his medical attendant; but what has he done?

Jenny. Unhinged and unstrung by the prospects of the approaching ceremony, I sought just now the congenial sympathy of the sad, sad lady on the second floor. As I approached her room I saw the door ajar—she was in close communion with her solicitor. (WALKINSHAW *much agitated.*) I heard his voice—and thus—and thus he spake: "Console

yourself, oh, sad, sad lady, for we have evidence that Walkinshaw—the fickle, fluttering, faithless Walkinshaw—is on the eve of marriage to another!" It was enough—too much—I cared to hear no more!

Tal. Dear me, Walkinshaw, I am surprised at you!

Wal. But, Jenny, hear me.

Jenny. I will hear nothing. It is enough for me that you have loved. Henceforward to me you are as one that is dead! You are an obliterated postage-stamp—not the less obliterated because the die has been wielded by an unworthy hand. Happily, Truth, Honour, Rectitude, Morality, Propriety, Benevolence, Veneration, and First Love are on the Balcony. They meet in Frederick, and to him I confide my heart!

FOGGERTY *enters from balcony.*

Fog. Jenny! I was sure you would! I was sure that when you came to think it over you couldn't help it. But, Walkinshaw?

Jenny. He is dead.

Fog. That's very sudden.

Jenny. He is dead to me. He lives to drag on a miserable existence, as a depressed and degraded monster.

Fog. I'm shocked at you, Walkinshaw!

Wal. Miss Talbot, I *cannot* struggle against your determination. I know that when you say you will not marry me you mean it!

Fog. She did last time.

Tal. Eh?

Fog. Oh, nothing, nothing.

Wal. I have only to ask that in memory of what I once was to you, you will keep my unhappy secret, and not subject me to the hideous consequences of an exposure.

Jenny. Sir, you deserve no mercy; but I am merciful. Your shameful secret is safe with me.

Fog. Walkinshaw, I'm at a loss for words in which to express definitely my sense of your infamous conduct, because I am not at present acquainted with the nature of your offence.

Tal. But, Jenny, you can't marry this man—he's mad! He can't contract matrimony—it would be illegal!

Jenny. They say you are mad, my own! Is it because you have never loved before?

Fog. Heed them not. They mistake the desponding utter-

ings of a crushed heart for the maniacal ravings of an unseated brain!

[UNCLE FOGLE *and* TALBOT *both about to speak at once.*

Tal. I beg your pardon.

Fogle. I beg yours.

Tal. Not at all.

Fogle Go on.

Tal. I was going to say that we must get a Commission to sit on him.

Fogle. Just what I was going to say.

Tal. It's a pitiable circumstance.

Fogle. Horrible!

Tal. Deplorable!

Fogle. Disastrous!

Tal. Glass of wine?

Fogle. With pleasure. (*They drink together.*)

Jenny (*coming down with* FOG). My own, own love! Mine, and only mine! Oh, tell me again you, at least, have never loved before!

Fog. Never! Often have I lain awake at night wondering what manner of thing this love of which I had heard so much might be, and now the sun has risen on my darkness, and all seems clear as summer noon!

Jenny. My love! Oh, this is ecstasy!

[*During this,* TALBOT *and* WALKINSHAW *and others, have been warily approaching* JENNY *and* FOGGERTY. TALBOT *and* WALKER *seize* JENNY, *while* WALKINSHAW, UNCLE FOGLE, *and* BALKER *seize* FOGGERTY. *The lovers are torn asunder.*

Fog. Unhand me, villains!

Jenny. Frederick, my own! They are taking me from you!

Fog. Cowards! Thus and thus do I deal with ye!

[*Throws them off.* JENNY *breaks from* TALBOT. *They rush to one another, and embrace.*

Jenny. Who shall separate us now? I am my own mistress!

Fog. And mine!

Enter MISS DE VERE. JENNY *rushes to her, and clings round her neck.* WALKINSHAW, *seeing her, buries his head in a newspaper to escape recognition.*

Miss de V. Frederick, rejoice with me! The news, the great and glorious tidings, have arrived! My faithless lover *is* on the point of marriage with another, and I am at last free to

accept those professions of affection with which for the last twelve months you have so eloquently pleaded, for my hand!

[JENNY *recoils in horror from her. Turns and looks at* FOGGERTY, *then faints in* TALBOT'S *arms.* FOGGERTY *stands confused for a moment, then turns round, rushes wildly to balcony at the back of the stage, and leaps out into the street. The others rush after him to stop him, but they are too late.* MISS DE VERE *faints in the arms of* WALKINSHAW, *whose head is still wrapped up in a newspaper. Picture.*

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Parlour in* WALKINSHAW'S *house, night. Lamps lit. The general arrangement of the scene is the same as the scene of* TALBOT'S *house in Act I.* WALKINSHAW *and* TALBOT *discovered.*

Wal. This is a dismal night, to what was to have been a fellow's wedding-day.

Tal. It might be more cheerful. But take heart, be sanguine. Perhaps you and Jenny would not have got on. You're not a very nice man, you know.

Wal. No, I know I'm not, but it's rather hard that my having been once engaged to Malvina de Vere should cause Jenny to break off with me at the last moment. And for Foggerty, who has also fallen into that middle-aged harpy's toils.

Tal. Don't mind Foggerty. Jenny won't have him now. I have got evidence that he is stark, staring mad, and, between ourselves, I have applied for a Commission *de lunatico* to sit on him at once. I am going to make the appointment now.

Wal. Hadn't you better wait till he comes back?

Tal. Hasn't he come back?

Wal. No, it's eight hours since he took his leap from the balcony, and nobody has seen him since.

Tal. Dear me! I don't think he could have hurt himself seriously, for I saw him flying down the street, ten miles an hour with Malvina after him. (*Looking out of window.*) Here he is; he has jumped out of a four-wheeler, which is tearing down the street at full speed. And there is another four-wheeler tearing full speed after it. What can it mean?

Enter FOGGERTY *exhausted. Dress muddy and disordered, hair dishevelled. He throws himself into a chair, breathless.*

Fog. At last! Safe at last.

Wal. Why, where have you been?

Fog. Everywhere.

Tal. You seem rather out of breath.

Fog. I am, a little.

Tal. A glass of wine?

Fog. With pleasure. (*Helps himself to a glass of sherry, and drinks.*)

Wal. And where is Malvina?

Fog. I have given her the slip at last. When I left the house I bolted up Harley Street. Malvina followed. I got into a cab; she got into another. I said, "drive anywhere." He drove everywhere. I told him to drive like the devil. He drove like the devil. So did Malvina. Regent's Park, Primrose Hill, Kentish Town, Holloway, Ball's Pond, Dalston, Hackney, Old Ford, Bow, Whitechapel, London Bridge, Southwark. At Southwark my horse fainted; so did Malvina's. I jumped out—got another cab. So did Malvina. Off again, Old Kent Road, Peckham, Camberwell, Walworth, Kennington, Brixton, Clapham, Battersea, Wandsworth. At Wandsworth my horse fainted. So did Malvina's. Jumped out, but no cab to be found. Bolted, on foot, followed by Malvina; ran through Putney, Barnes, Mortlake, Kew, Chiswick, Turnham Green, Shepherd's Bush, Kensal Green, Malvina after me. At Kensal Green I fainted; so did Malvina. Off again, through Westbourne Park. At Westbourne Park I found a cab; so did Malvina. Off again; Maida Hill, Edgware Road, St. John's Wood, New Road, Harley Street. As I passed the door, jumped out unobserved, and left my empty cab tearing on ten miles an hour, and Malvina after it.

Tal. Aren't you tired after your stroll?

Fog. A little.

Tal. I am not surprised. Will you excuse me, I have a business appointment. (*Aside to* WALKINSHAW.) Don't let him go; keep him here till I return. [*Exit* TALBOT.

Wal. That is a very determined woman.

Fog. A woman of singular strength of character.

Wal. (*anxiously*). Do you think there is any chance of her coming here?

Fog. Not the remotest. (*Knock heard.*) There she is.

Wal. Malvina here. She must not catch me. (*Aloud.*) Foggerty, you'll keep my secret—you'll not betray me?

Fog. Not for worlds.

Wal. A thousand thanks. I will never forget it. (*Shakes his hand and exits.*)

Fog. I don't know what your secret is, but it's quite safe with me. There she is—it's no use, I can't go any further, fairly run to earth! (*Throws himself into chair to right of stage.*)

Enter MALVINA *from left, breathless, and much tumbled. She throws herself into a chair to left of stage.*

Fog. Good evening.

Mal. Good evening.

Fog. London is a large city.

Mal. Enormous.

Fog. Capital cabs, though.

Mal. Capital cabs.

Fog. Didn't I catch sight of you in Southwark this afternoon.

Mal. Quite possible.

Fog. I thought it was you.

Mal. It was. Going to marry me?

Fog. No.

Mal. Don't you love me?

Fog. Not that I am aware of.

Mal. But you proposed to me.

Fog. I have no recollection of it.

Mal. I have got it in writing over and over again. (*Produces a bundle of letters.*)

Fog. All those mine?

Mal. Every man-jack of them.

Fog. May I look at them?

Mal. Not exactly—wasn't born yesterday.

Fog. (*aside*). No, you certainly were *not*.

Mal. You're quite resolved?

Fog. Quite. You must conquer this passion. I am sorry if I have encouraged hopes which are not destined to be realized; but, although I have a sincere regard for you I can never be more to you than a friend.

Mal. That is your ultimatum?

Fog. That is my ultimatum.

Mal. Then again I have to resort to that dread expedient which a sympathetic country has provided for the unsuspecting victims of man's designing villainy. Allow me. (*Gives paper to* FOGGERTY.)

Fog. What's this?

Mal. It is a writ of summons at the suit of Malvina de Vere, spinster, against Frederick Foggerty, bachelor, to recover damages for breach of promise to marry.

Fog. Thank you. The damages, I see, are not stated.

Mal. Not yet. True delicacy shrinks from placing matters of this quasi-sentimental character upon a mere business footing. I thought it would be altogether more delicate if we could arrive at an estimate by a friendly calculation.

Fog. Very thoughtful.

Mal. It's a pretty idea; I always do it. Now, let me see. First of all there is my distress of mind, and consequent wear and tear of personal beauty.

Fog. Not worth naming. Miss de Vere is, if possible, more lovely than ever.

Mal. Yes, I know I am now; but oh! think, think of the anxious days and sleepless nights yet to come!

Fog. To be sure.

Mal. The worm in the bud——

Fog. True; I forgot the worm in the bud. How long do you think you will be before you get over it?

Mal. It generally takes about six weeks.

Fog. That is not very long.

Mal. Make it months if you like.

Fog. Not for worlds. You think the worm will have had enough in six weeks?

Mal. Oh, I think so. Six weeks at a guinea a day—forty-two guineas.

Fog. Dear!

Mal. I couldn't do it for less.

Fog. (*getting his arm round her*). Make it pounds, do.

Mal. What a wheedling way you have! Very well, pounds. Then there is the disappointment, the blackness of a desolate future. What shall we say for the disappointment?

Fog. I shouldn't put that at a high figure if I were you. I shouldn't make a good husband.

Mal. (*politely*). Oh, I won't allow that for a moment.

Fog. No, but indeed I shouldn't.

Mal. (*insinuatingly*). Not even such a wife as I?

Fog. If anything could make a domestic man of me it would be the knowledge that I had a nice, snug, cosy creature like you waiting at home for me; but nothing could.

Mal. I don't think I could put the disappointment at less than a hundred.

Fog. A hundred! A hundred for such a good-for-nothing

scamp as I? Ridiculous! It's absurd. You don't know what a ruffian I am. Fifty is the outside figure.

Mal. Oh, Mr. Foggerty, you under-rate yourself. I don't think—stand up. (*He stands up.*) No, I couldn't put the disappointment at less than a hundred.

Fog. Fifty!

Mal. A hundred!

Fog. Split the difference, and say seventy-five.

Mal. Very well; but it's a positive insult to you to put it so low.

Fog. Don't mention it, I beg.

Mal. Then we come to the publicity of the thing—the shame of having to lay bare in open court the holiest feelings of our imperfect nature.

Fog. Haven't you got used to that yet?

Mal. Used to it? My dear Mr. Foggerty, believe me, that the agony of having to trot out one's affections for the entertainment of a ribald public becomes more excruciating each time. On the whole, I cannot quote the publicity at a lower figure than five hundred.

Fog. Four.

Mal. Five.

Fog. Split the difference, and say four hundred and fifty. Come, now, do, for me.

Mal. It's ridiculously cheap; but I never did in all my experience come across anybody with such coaxing ways. But then, there's the trousseau.

Fog. But that will do for next time. I suppose you have had the same trousseau in each case.

Mal. Oh dear, no! Only the last four cases. I find that a trousseau only lasts out six engagements. You see, it gets handled and messed. And there's the moth and change of fashion. I usually reckon it at twenty-five per cent. off prime cost. Prime cost two hundred—twenty-five off that—one-fifty.

Fog. How much is that altogether?

Mal. Let's see. Six hundred and seventeen pounds. Then there are costs as between lawyer and client.

Fog. Say six hundred, all told, and then—who knows—perhaps we shall be engaged again.

Mal. Oh, I couldn't do it. First-class evidence, you know, warm and flowery letters—all in your own writing.

Fog. Are they warm and flowery?

Mal. Ridiculously so. There's poetry in some of them—your own.

Fog. (*aside*). My own! I wonder where I got it from?

(*Aloud.*) But wait a moment, Jenny won't have me now. I really don't see what is to prevent me marrying you.

Mal. Nothing whatever, if you prefer that course; then there will only be the costs out of pocket.

Fog. There's the remains of a fine woman about you.

Mal. I am generally known as the Splendid Ruin.

Fog. You *are* a splendid ruin—a sprig or two of ivy and a owl under your arm and you would be complete. My dear girl, if it is a question of paying six hundred pounds and costs, or marrying you, I'll marry you.

Mal. You will?

Fog. Certainly. I must have seen something in you, or I shouldn't have proposed to you. I have no doubt you are a much more agreeable woman than you look.

Mal. Surely, surely, you know how agreeable I am by this time.

Fog. Yes—yes—no doubt; but—Malvina—

Mal. Call me by the old pet name—the name of happy memories.

Fog. Yes—that is just it—I don't know what it was.

Mal. (*astonished*). You don't know what it was?

Fog. Malvina, I will be candid with you. A singular misfortune has overtaken me—my mind, perfectly keen and sound at the present moment, is a blank as regards everything that took place before this morning—my memory is quite gone.

Mal. How remarkable!

Fog. Odd, isn't it?

Mal. Then that accounts——

Fog. For my not knowing that confounded pet name of happy memories, and fifty other things. Now, if you will undertake to tell me all about myself—who I am, what I am, where I am, and who and what everybody else is—and, in short, enable me to hold my position before the world without making an infernal fool of myself, I'll marry you out of gratitude. Now, is it a bargain?

Mal. Is it a bargain? I rather think it is a bargain. But what an extraordinary state of things.

Fog. Well, it is singular. I'll just run upstairs and make a change. You see what a state I am in after my run; and then the sooner you post me up to this morning the better.

Mal. I will; go, my love, and in the mean time I will draw up a statement of facts for your information. Farewell.

Fog. Farewell. Don't you think——

Mal. Think what?

Fog That under the circumstances I might venture to—no—better not. [*Exit.*

Mal. At last, oh Fate, thou smilest on me! There seems some prospect that that blighted bud, my heart, may blossom into wedded dignity. But who are these who break my solitude?

Enter TALBOT, *followed by* DOCTOR LOBB, DOCTOR DOBB, *and* BLOGG, *a rough sullen-looking man, who keeps in the background.*

Tal. Come in, gentlemen, pray. Be so good as to sit down. (*Sees* MALVINA.) Oh! the athletic lady. I beg your pardon, Mr. Foggerty——

Mal. Has sought the sacred precincts of his chamber, to make a certain change in his apparel.

Tal. Oh! exactly, he has had a fatiguing afternoon. (*Aside.*) Dear me, this is awkward.

Mal. I'll not intrude upon your converse, sirs. I wait an interview with Frederick, and will, with your permission, gentlemen, attend his coming in the two-pair-back.

[*Curtsys and exit.*

Tal. Fine woman, sound in wind and limb. (*Aloud.*) Gentlemen, the unfortunate subject of your investigation will be here in a very few minutes. You will not find him violent, gentlemen.

Dr. Lobb. His paroxysms are mild, are they?

Tal. I should hardly call them paroxysms, they don't amount to that; I should rather describe him as the victim of extraordinary hallucinations.

Dr. Dobb. Very sad indeed.

Dr. Lobb. And what, my dear Mr. Talbot, is the subject or bent of his delusions?

Talbot. Well, gentlemen, among other singular misconceptions he is under the impression that he is the inventor of the famous "Longevity Pill."

Dr. Dobb. Pardon me—the "notorious"—we don't use the term "famous" in connection with patent medicines. We call them "notorious."

Talbot. Oh! then he thinks he invented the "notorious" Longevity Pill.

Dr. Lobb. It is a very significant symptom. I remember the case of an unfortunate man who systematically infringed other people's patents, and actually made a fine fortune by doing so—mad, sir—hopelessly mad.

Talbot. He also believes that he derives a very large income

by its sale, when in point of fact he has not a penny in the world.

Dr. Dobb. Oh, a very common delusion. I recollect an instance of a poor half-witted creature, who drew enormous cheques on a bank, at which he had positively no account whatever, and in a name which actually did not belong to him. The cheques were cashed and he was off to America before the delusion was discovered. Mad, sir—quite mad.

Talbot. Then again, he will accept any theory concerning himself that you choose to suggest. You can make him believe that he is a soldier, sailor, tinker, tailor, ploughboy, apothecary, thief—all in turn. Remarkable, isn't it?

Dr. Lobb. Not at all. Nothing more common. I once gave evidence in the case of an unhappy man, who obtained large sums of money from charitable people on the plea that he was a bricklayer's widow with twelve children. The poor fellow would have had twelve months' imprisonment, with hard labour, but for my evidence. Mad, sir, hopelessly mad.

Talbot. If you will excuse me for a moment, gentlemen, I will send him to you. You will find the sherry on the side-board. (*Aside.*) Clear-headed, logical men of sense, these mad doctors. [*Exit* TALBOT.

Dr. Dobb (*turning to* BLOGG). Now, Blogg.

Blogg. Sir.

Dr. Dobb. Attend to us.

Dr. Lobb. Dr. Dobb means listen attentively to what we say.

Dr. Dobb. If we find it necessary, as no doubt we shall, to give this unfortunate gentleman into your charge, you will humour him in everything.

Dr. Lobb. Dr. Dobb means you will contradict him in nothing.

Dr. Dobb. In nothing whatever.

Dr. Lobb. In other words, in nothing at all.

Blogg. All right, guv'nor.

Dr. Dobb. Now, mind you keep your eye upon him.

Dr. Lobb. In other words, don't let him get out of your sight.

Dr. Dobb. Whatever he says, accept his delusion.

Dr. Lobb. My friend means, humour his hallucinations.

Dr. Dobb. Agree to his statements at once, however absurd they may seem.

Dr. Lobb. In other words, accept his theories, however ridiculous they may appear. (*During this* BLOGG *is sitting, eating.*)

Dr. Dobb. It's the only way to deal with a confirmed delusionist.

Dr. Lobb. There is no other course to take with a hopeless visionary.

Enter FOGGERTY, *unobserved.*

Dr. Dobb. And now we had better go and prepare our report.
Dr. Lobb. By all means. (*Going.*)
Dr. Dobb. (*politely*). After you.
Dr. Lobb. Couldn't think of it.
Dr. Dobb. Oh, but I insist.
Dr. Lobb. As you please. [*Exit.* DR. LOBB.
Dr. Dobb. D——d coxcomb. [*Following.*
Fog. (*who has been staring at the* Doctors *in blank astonishment during this dialogue, turns to* BLOGG, *who is eating impassively*). Now, what is this? Is it alive, or is it stuffed?
Blogg (*finishing his supper*). I'm stuffed.
Fog. What are you doing here?
Blogg. I'm keeping a eye on you.
Fog. Do I understand that your instructions are to follow me wherever I go?
Blogg. No, 'cause you ain't agoing nowhere.
Fog. (*aside*). Now, how am I to deal with this ruffian. I could kick him out—at least, I think I could—but he seems to have some right here—he isn't a man in possession! (*Aloud.*) You aren't a man in possession, are you?
Blogg. No, I ain't a man in possession.
Fog. (*suddenly*). I see what it is—he's a constable. I have committed a crime, which I shouldn't have committed if Spiff hadn't been Spiffed out. And these two black-and-white scoundrels are detectives. (*Aloud.*) I say, those two piebald idiots, who left as I came in, are detectives. You can't deny that!
Blogg (*stolidly*). I ain't agoin' to deny nothin'.
Fog. (*aside*). This is perfectly appalling! What have I done? What is my crime—is it embezzlement, forgery, bigamy, highway robbery — what? That's it, I haven't an idea.
Blogg. Don't take on so, there's lots in the same fix.
Fog. Lots in the same fix! Yes, I know there are; but they know what they've done, I don't. (*Suddenly.*) Walkinshaw is at the bottom of this.
Blogg. Ah! Walkinshaw's at the bottom of it!
Fog. Of course he is. He has led me into this; mind, whatever it is, he has led me into it!
Blogg. Ah! he's led you into it.

Fog. Whatever it is, I will confess all. I will turn Queen's evidence against Walkinshaw, and will bring Walkinshaw to justice; and, in return for my services to the State, claim the Royal pardon.'

Blogg. Ah, that is your game! Nothing like it!

Fog. Now you, sir, just attend carefully to what I say. I intend to make a clean breast of it and admit everything. (*Aside.*) It would simplify matters if I had some remote notion, just a vague, distant, glimmering of an idea, what Walkinshaw and I have done. Never mind: half a dozen shrewdly framed leading questions will pump it all out. (*Aloud.*) Now, then, are you ready to receive my confession?

Blogg. All right—fire away.

Fog. (*aloud*). Now, then, you know, of course, *when* this deed was done, for which Walkinshaw and I will shortly have to answer to the outraged majesty of the law? (*Waits anxiously for the reply.*)

Blogg (*indifferently*). Oh, I know—fust of April.

Fog. (*seizing on the idea*). On the very first day of April, in the year of grace 1879, this deed for which Walkinshaw and I will shortly have to answer to the outraged majesty of the law was perpetrated. We selected the first of April because—because we were anxious to get it over as soon after March as possible. Now, then, when do you think we did it?

Blogg (*stupidly*). Can't say, I'm sure.

Fog. No; but guess.

Blogg. I ain't good at guessin'.

Fog. (*aside*). What an unimaginative ass it is. (*Aloud.*) Come, now, make an effort—just one.

Blogg (*after a pause*). Twelve o'clock at night—when nobody was lookin'.

Fog. At the mystic hour of midnight, on the very first day of April, in the year of grace 1879, Walkinshaw and I, having previously ascertained that we were secure from the impertinent observation of casual passers-by, perpetrated that deed, for which we shall only too surely have to take our stand at the bar of the outraged majesty of the law. We selected midnight because it's generally darker then than it is in the daylight. Well, there I was. There I was, I say. I say I was there.

Blogg. Alone?

Fog. Alone in the grim and ghostly solitude of that April midnight. I needn't tell you how I was occupied.

Blogg. Maybe you was digging a hole?

Fog. Armed with a pickaxe and a spade, stripped to the shirt, and with the beady dews of mental agony upon my brow, I shovelled up the fat, black earth until the hole was wide and deep enough for—for the purpose we had in view. Scarcely had I satisfied myself that the hole was wide and deep enough for the purpose we had in view, when, what do you think happened?

Blogg. P'r'aps Walkinshaw came up?

Fog. Creeping guiltily in the ghostly moonlight, as one whose mind was burdened with a crime too great for him to bear, Walkinshaw came up. You know as well as I do what that monster in human form had with him.

Blogg. Maybe it was a sack?

Fog. It *was* a sack. Closed up at one end but open at the other for the convenience of removing whatever it was intended to contain. You see I am perfectly candid. I conceal nothing from you. That sack contained—the booty.

Blogg. Oh! she was a booty, was she?

Fog. Eh?

Blogg. I say she was a booty, was she?

Fog. She? Did you say "she"?

Blogg. You said she was a booty!

Fog. (*recovering himself with an effort*). My dear sir, she was one of the finest women you ever saw in the whole course of your life! (*Aside.*) It's murder! By all the furies, it's murder. Who was she? What could have induced us to do it?

Blogg. Was she dead?

Fog. Dead, but still warm. (*Aside.*) This is appalling! (*Aloud.*) And how—how do you think this unhappy lady met her miserable fate?

Blogg (*after a pause*). Pound and a 'arf o' arsenic?

Fog. Very near a pound and a half of arsenic—not quite, but very nearly—purchased in small doses for the ostensible purpose of killing rats, and administered to her by—whom do you suppose? (*Waits anxiously for* BLOGG'S *reply.*)

Blogg. Oh, Walkinshaw, in course?

Fog. (*relieved and shaking his hand*). My dear fellow, I did you an injustice. I took you for an ass. Allow me to apologize—you are one of the sharpest men I have met for a long time. Of course it was administered by Walkinshaw. And how do you suppose that fiend in human form contrived to administer this deleterious mineral to his ill-fated victim?

Blogg (*after a pause*). Apple pudden?

Fog. You are quite right; it *was* in an apple pudding—a

large apple pudding, the apples having been previously pared and cut in quarters and the cores extracted. Now the question is—and a very important question it is—how far am I implicated?

Blogg. Ah! that is the question.

Fog. True, I assisted him in disposing of the body. True I went even so far as to dig the hole that was to receive it. But then the question arises—how did I come to do it? How came I to be there at all?

Blogg. Oh! you was a walkin' in your sleep.

Fog. I was in a state of the profoundest somnambulistic unconsciousness. I give you my untarnished word of honour I was snoring heavily during the whole transaction. As for the lady—who do you think she was? Of all unlikely people on the face of this earth, who do you suppose that beautiful but unhappy lady was?

Blogg (*pleasantly*). Suppose we say his aunt—his aunt Sarah?

Fog. It was his admirable aunt Sarah—as excellent and blameless a lady as ever stepped, and, I assure you, a first-rate aunt—a really capital aunt. In point of fact, she had but one fault in her composition, and I needn't tell you what that was.

Blogg (*after a pause*). Drink?

Fog. Her passion for alcoholic stimulants was that lovely but deeply injured lady's bane. Beginning with small and comparatively harmless drams, the detestable habit gradually grew upon her, and she got from one thing to another (for I am anxious to omit nothing, however insignificant, from my confession), until at last she degenerated into a monomaniacal dipsomaniac.

Blogg. Lor!

Fog. Walkinshaw, one of the most exemplary nephews in the world, really couldn't stand it any longer. His credit as a gentleman, his position in society, his very means of livelihood were all affected by the disreputable habits of this abominable old lady—one of the finest women you ever saw. One day he made a large apple pudding and flavoured it with nearly a pound and a half of arsenic, and I, in one of those fits of somnambulistic unconsciousness to which I have been subject from infancy, dug a hole to receive the body, snoring heavily the whole time. (*Aside.*) There, I have done it now. What *have* I said? Oh, Walkinshaw, Walkinshaw, if I only had my fingers round your throat at this moment, justice would be baulked of her victim.

Enter WALKINSHAW *hurriedly, in great coat, and rug, and carrying luggage.*

Wal. (*in great distress*). She has found me out. She is after me. I can just catch the nine forty-five; but I have not a moment to lose.

Fog. (*seizing him*). Stop, scoundrel! Miscreant! Stop!

Wal. What do you mean? Let me go! I'm bolting!

Fog. Bolting, are you? Not while I have the strength of twenty men, as I have now. (*Struggling desperately with him.*)

Blogg (*to* WALKINSHAW). You had best stop. Do what the poor gentleman tells you. Don't contrairy him.

Wal. Stop! I can't stop! Let me go! Don't shake me! You're always rumpling me!

Fog. (*furiously*). Rumple you! I'll rumple you!

[*Shakes him violently,* WALKINSHAW *quite helpless in his hands.*

Wal. (*breathless*). Pray don't—let me go!

Blogg. Better let the poor gentleman rumple you, if he wants to.

Fog. Abandon all hope of escape! Your diabolical treatment of that amiable and deeply-injured lady will soon be blown to the four corners of the earth. (*Shakes him violently.*)

Wal. I didn't treat her handsomely, I admit. But you treated her just as badly as I did.

Fog. (*remorsefully*). I did. I know it. Guilty wretch that I am! But who led me into it? Who used his diabolical power over me to compel me to act as his accomplice? Oh, I could throttle you! (*Shakes him.*)

Wal. (*faintly*). If you will kindly desist for a moment perhaps I could answer you.

Blogg (*aside to* WALKINSHAW). Don't contrairy him, sir. Best let the poor gentleman throttle you, if he wants to. It's the only way.

Wal. Hush! She is coming! She is after me! Hide me—hide me! She follows me wherever I go.

Fog. (*flinging him off*). The conscience-stricken coward is haunted by the imaginary presence of his miserable victim!

Wal. (*very faintly, and all of a heap*). Don't quite understand.

Fog. Understand that I have confessed everything. Your beautiful but ill-fated aunt Sarah——

Wal. I haven't got an aunt Sarah.

Fog. Her unfortunate passion for drink—the apple pudding

—the arsenic—her agonizing death—the blood-stained sack and its ghastly tenant—the midnight grave!

Wal. (*very faintly*). Some mistake somewhere.

Fog. Officer, seize him!

Blogg. But——

Fog. Seize him, I say.

Blogg (*going to* WALKINSHAW, *who is all of a heap against the table*). Werry sorry, sir! But the poor gentleman mustn't be contrairied. (*Seizes* WALKINSHAW.)

Wal. (*very limp and helpless*) Don't *you* rumple me!

[BLOGG *sits at table with* WALKINSHAW, *a helpless lump in his lap.*

Enter MALVINA, *hurriedly.*

Mal. He came this way. (*Sees* WALKINSHAW *in* BLOGG'S *lap.*) Oh, here he is—now—now I have got you. (WALKINSHAW *stares helplessly at her like an idiotic baby.*)

Fog. (*to* MALVINA). Don't touch him, he is a murderer!

Mal. A murderer! (*Recoiling towards* FOGGERTY.)

[BLOGG *rises, places* WALKINSHAW *on a chair like a helpless Guy Fawkes.*

Blogg (*aside to* MALVINA, *who is reclining in* FOGGERTY'S *arms*). Take my advice, and don't you go too near him, miss. He is a madman.

Mal. A madman! (*Recoiling from* FOGGERTY, *who for the first time understands that he is regarded as a lunatic, and assumes an expression of horror-struck surprise.*) A murderer and a madman! And woe is me, it is to such men as these that I have handed over my unsuspecting heart

Enter TALBOT.

Tal. (*aside to* BLOGG). We are quite ready to remove him; but I'll break it pleasantly to him. (*Aloud.*) My dear Foggerty, I'm extremely sorry to say that it is necessary to place you under restraint.

Fog. Under restraint! I see it all now. They take me for a madman. It only needed this to complete my misery.

Blogg. Come along o' me. There's a cab at the door, and it'll be done as comfortable as possible.

Fog. Away! (*Throwing* TALBOT *and* BLOGG *off.* TALBOT *falls helplessly into a chair,* BLOGG *goes off.*) Matters have reached a crisis. There's only one thing to be done. I have Rebecca's pills in my pocket. One last appeal to her, and if

that fails, I give in. (*Pours out a glass of water and swallows pill.*) Rebecca! appear!

[*Hurried music.* REBECCA *appears through trap.*

Reb. (*impatiently*). Now, what do you want? I'm extremely busy, and this interruption is most annoying.

Fog. I won't detain you long. In my anxiety to appear equal to the intellectual pressure of the conversation, I've been led into making such preposterous statements that I run a very good chance of being hanged first and confined in a lunatic asylum afterwards.

Reb. Really this doesn't concern me. I've nothing to do with it. My guardianship is spiffed out.

Fog. Yes, I know it's spiffed out; but you're an extremely intelligent and accomplished young person—don't you think if you made an effort you could spiff it in again?

Reb. Out of the question. I should have to admit that I made a mistake, and I should be at once relegated to the back rows, among the stout ones, and never allowed to dance even in a quartette, and lately I've been dancing solo.

Fog. But——

Reb. I've nothing more to say; your situation doesn't concern me in any way. I beg I may not be interrupted again. (*On trap, stamps her foot and says, "Go"—she descends through trap.*)

Fog. Stop!

Reb. (*half down trap*). What *do* you want? (*Remains half-way down trap.*)

Fog. Allow me to remind you that I've forty-seven pills left, and I can call you up forty-seven times if I please. I don't want to make myself unpleasant to a lady, but if you're not civil, I'll give you a time of it.

Reb. (*rising through trap again*). Well, be quick. What is it?

Fog. Let's understand one another. When I took the draught all the consequences of my having known Spiff were obliterated.

Reb. Utterly.

Fog. But if I had never known Spiff I should never have got into a difficulty on account of Spiff, and if I had never got into that difficulty I should never have applied to you to get me out of it, and if I had never applied to you to get me out of it you would never have given me that infernal draught, which has been the cause of all the miseries with which I'm threatened.

Reb. Dear me, I never thought of that.

Fog. In point of fact, I've been saddled with consequences from which, according to the terms of my contract, I ought to have been entirely free.

Reb. It certainly seems so. I'm very sorry.

Fog. Now all this comes of hurrying your work. If you'd do a little less bedevilment and do it well you'd make a better job of it in the end.

Reb. It's not bedevilment. I'm a good fairy.

Fog. Good, but stupid.

Reb. Good, but stupid. I hope you won't mention this?

Fog. That depends upon yourself. You've got me into this fix, and you must get me out of it. Restore matters to their original condition, barring Spiff, whom I won't hear of at any price, and we'll say no more about it.

Reb. Very good, I'll do it; but mind, it must never be known that I "tried back," or I should get into a terrible scrape. Are you ready for the change?

Fog. Quite ready.

Reb. Then "go."

[*Waves wand. Slow music. Scene suddenly changes to scene of Act I., daylight. All the* Fairies *enter at the back and group until the end.* Talbot, Malvina, *and* Walkinshaw *gradually revive from their swoon.* Malvina *goes to* Walkinshaw.

Mal. Walkinshaw! My own!

Wal. Malvina! (*Embraces.*)

Enter Jenny, *followed by* Lottie *and* Tottie *in dresses of Act I., then* Uncle Fogle, Aunt Bogle, Walker, *and* Balker, *all in dresses of Act I., with favours.* Jenny *rushes to* Foggerty.

Jenny. Frederick! My own.

Fog. Jenny! (*Embraces.*)

Tal. Now then—come along—the carriages have been waiting ever so long, and the clergyman is getting cold. Uncle Fogle take Aunt Bogle, Walker take Lottie, Balker take Tottie.

Jenny. Frederick! In ten minutes we shall be made one. Tell me once more that you have never, never loved before!

Fog. Never; wouldn't dream of such a thing! It's all right; it's all over—it's past—gone—spiffed out for ever!

Jenny. What's spiffed out?

Fog. Medical men—mad-house—breach of promise—execution—murdered Aunt Sarah! All gone!

Wal. What's the man talking about?

Fog. (*suddenly serious*). Walkinshaw, you did *not* murder your aunt Sarah?

Wal. Never!

Tal. Oh, too absurd! Ha! ha! ha!

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Fog. Walkinshaw, you are going to be married to Malvina. If, in the fulness of time, Heaven should ever bless you with a little aunt Sarah, swear that that admirable woman's life shall be as sacred as your own!

Wal. Before Heaven, I swear it.

Fog. I knew it! God bless you, Walkinshaw.

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Fog. And, Jenny—dear Jenny—you won't marry Walkinshaw, but, on the contrary, you'll marry me, and Walkinshaw will marry Malvina; she has an excellent constitution. And Walker, Balker, Lottie, Tottie, Fogle, Bogle, you'll all marry each other (*all laugh*)! and I declare I'm so happy I don't know whether to laugh or to cry. (*All laughing.*) Which shall it be? Oh, well, better be unanimous. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

All. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

[*They pair off.* FOGGERTY *with* JENNY, WALKINSHAW *with* MALVINA, WALKER *with* LOTTIE, BALKER *with* TOTTIE, UNCLE FOGLE *with* AUNT BOGLE, *and move towards entrance, laughing heartily. Scene opens at back during this.* Fairies *enter, laughing heartily, and waving wands.* REBECCA *ascends on stool at back, also laughing. Red fire. Curtain.*

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN.

A TRAGIC EPISODE,

IN THREE TABLEAUX,

FOUNDED ON AN OLD DANISH LEGEND.

First performed in public at a Matinée, on behalf of the "Serpent" Fund at the Vaudeville Theatre, London, on Wednesday, June 3rd, 1891.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING CLAUDIUS, *of Denmark*	MR. ALEXANDER WATSON.
QUEEN GERTRUDE, *of Denmark* ...	MRS. THEODORE WRIGHT.
HAMLET, *Queen Gertrude's Son—betrothed to* OPHELIA	MR. FRANK LINDO.
ROSENCRANTZ, *a Courtier, in love with* OPHELIA	MR. S. HERBERTE-BASING.
GUILDENSTERN, *a Courtier*	MR. C. LAMBOURNE.
FIRST PLAYER	MR. C. STEWART.
SECOND PLAYER	MISS BESSLE.
OPHELIA	MISS MARY BESSLE.

Courtiers, Pages, etc.

ARGUMENT.

KING CLAUDIUS, *when a young man, wrote a five-act tragedy which was damned, and all reference to it forbidden under penalty of death. The* KING *has a son—*HAMLET*—whose tendency to soliloquy has so alarmed his mother,* QUEEN GERTRUDE, *that she has sent for* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN, *to devise some Court revels for his entertainment.* ROSENCRANTZ *is a former lover of* OPHELIA (*to whom* HAMLET *is betrothed*), *and they lay their heads together to devise a plan by which* HAMLET *may be put out of the way. Some Court theatricals are in preparation.* OPHELIA *and* ROSENCRANTZ *persuade* HAMLET *to play his father's tragedy before the* KING *and Court.* HAMLET, *who is unaware of the proscription, does so, and he is banished, and* ROSENCRANTZ *happily united to* OPHELIA.

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN.

FIRST TABLEAU.

Interior of KING CLAUDIUS'S *Palace.* CLAUDIUS *discovered seated in a gloomy attitude.* QUEEN GERTRUDE *on a stool at his feet, consoling him.*

Q. Nay, be not sad, my lord!
Cl. Sad, lovëd Queen?
If by an effort of the will I could
Annul the ever-present Past—disperse
The gaunt and gloomy ghosts of bygone deeds,
Or bind them with imperishable chains
In caverns of the past incarcerate,
Then could I smile again—but not till then!
Q. Oh, my dear lord!
If aught there be that gives thy soul unrest,
Tell it to me.
Cl. Well-loved and faithful wife,
Tender companion of my faltering life,
Yes; I *can* trust thee! Listen, then, to me:
Many years since—when but a headstrong lad—
I wrote a five-act tragedy.
Q. (*interested*). Indeed?
Cl. A play, writ by a king—
Q. And *such* a King!—
Cl. Finds ready market. It was read at once,
But ere 'twas read, accepted. Then the Press
Teemed with portentous import. Elsinore
Was duly placarded by willing hands;
We know that walls have ears—I gave them tongues—
And they were eloquent with promises.

Q. Even the *dead* walls?
Cl. (*solemnly*). Ay, the deader they,
The louder they proclaimed!
Q. (*appalled*). Oh, marvellous!
Cl. The day approached—all Denmark stood agape.
Arrangements were devised at once by which
Seats might be booked a twelvemonth in advance.
The first night came.
Q. And did the play succeed?
Cl. In one sense, yes.
Q. Oh, I was sure of it!
Cl. A farce was given to play the people in—
My tragedy succeeded that. That's all!
Q. And how long did it run?
Cl. About ten minutes.
Ere the first act had traced one-half its course
The curtain fell, never to rise again!
Q. And did the people hiss?
Cl. No—worse than that—
They laughed. Sick with the shame that covered me,
I knelt down, palsied, in my private box,
And prayed the hearsed and catacombëd dead
Might quit their vaults, and claim me for their own!
But it was not to be.
Q. Oh, my good lord,
The house was surely packed!
Cl. It was—by me.
My favourite courtiers crowded every place—
From floor to floor the house was peopled by
The sycophantic crew. My tragedy
Was more than even sycophants could stand!
Q. Was it, my lord, so very, very bad?
Cl. Not to deceive my trusting Queen, it was.
Q. And when the play failed, didst thou take no steps
To set thyself right with the world?
Cl. I did.
The acts were five—though by five acts too long,
I wrote an Act by way of epilogue—
An act by which the penalty of death
Was meted out to all who sneered at it.
The play was not good—but the punishment
Of those that laughed at it was capital.
Q. Think on't no more, my lord. Now, mark me well:
To cheer our son, whose solitary tastes
And tendency to long soliloquy

Have much alarmed us, I, unknown to thee,
Have sent for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern—
Two merry knaves, kin to Polonius,
Who will devise such revels in our Court—
Such antic schemes of harmless merriment—
As shall abstract his meditative mind
From sad employment. Claudius, who can tell
But that they may divert my lord as well?
Ah, they are here!

Enter GUILDENSTERN.

Guild. My homage to the Queen!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

Ros. (*kneeling*). In hot obedience to the Royal 'hest
We have arrived, prepared to do our best.
Q. We welcome you to Court. Our Chamberlain
Shall see that you are suitably disposed.
Here is his daughter. She will hear your will
And see that it receives fair countenance.
[*Exeunt* KING *and* Queen, *lovingly.*

Enter OPHELIA.

Ros. Ophelia! [*Both embrace her.*
Oph. (*delighted and surprised*). Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!
This meeting likes me much. We have not met
Since we were babies!
Ros. The Queen hath summoned us,
And I have come in a half-hearted hope
That I may claim once more my baby-love!
Oph. Alas, I am betrothed!
Ros. Betrothed? To whom?
Oph. To Hamlet!
Ros. Oh, incomprehensible!
Thou lovest Hamlet?
Oph. (*demurely*). Nay, I said not so—
I said we were betrothed.
Guild. And what's he like?
Oph. Alike for no two seasons at a time.
Sometimes he's tall—sometimes he's very short—
Now with black hair—now with a flaxen wig—
Sometimes an English accent—then a French—
Then English with a strong provincial "burr"
Once an American, and once a Jew—

But Danish never, take him how you will!
And strange to say, whate'er his tongue may be,
Whether he's dark or flaxen—English—French—
Though we're in Denmark, A.D., ten—six—two—
He always dresses as King James the First!

Guild. Oh, he is surely mad!

Oph. Well, there again
Opinion is divided. Some men hold
That he's the sanest, far, of all sane men—
Some that he's really sane, but shamming mad—
Some that he's really mad, but shamming sane—
Some that he will be mad, some that he *was*—
Some that he couldn't be. But on the whole
(As far as I can make out what they mean)
The favourite theory's somewhat like this:
Hamlet is idiotically sane
With lucid intervals of lunacy.

Ros. We must devise some plan to stop this match!

Guild. Stay! Many years ago, King Claudius
Was guilty of a five-act tragedy.
The play was damned, and none may mention it
Under the pain of death. We might contrive
To make him play this piece before the King,
And take the consequence.

Ros. Impossible!
For every copy was destroyed.

Oph. But one—
My father's!

Ros. Eh?

Oph. In his capacity
As our Lord Chamberlain * he has *one* copy. I
This night, when all the Court is drowned in sleep,
Will creep with stealthy foot into his den
And there abstract the precious manuscript!

Guild. The plan is well conceived! but take good heed,
Your father may detect you.

Oph. Oh, dear, no.
My father spends his long official days
In reading all the rubbishing new plays.
From ten to four at work he may be found:
And then—my father sleeps exceeding sound!

[*Picture.* OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN, *grouped.*

* All bow reverentially at mention of this functionary.

SECOND TABLEAU.

Enter QUEEN, *meeting* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Q. Have you as yet planned aught that may relieve
Our poor afflicted son's despondency?
Ros. Madam, we've lost no time. Already we
Are getting up some Court theatricals
In which the Prince will play a leading part.
Q. That's well-bethought—it will divert his mind.
But soft—he comes.
Ros. How gloomily he stalks,
As one o'erwhelmed with weight of anxious care.
He thrusts his hand into his bosom—thus—
Starts—looks around—then, as if reassured,
Rumples his hair and rolls his glassy eyes!
Q. (*appalled*). That means—he's going to soliloquize!
Prevent this, gentlemen, by any means!
Guild. We will, but how?
Q. Anticipate his points,
And follow out his argument for him;
Thus will you cut the ground from 'neath his feet
And leave him nought to say.
Ros. and Guild. We will!—we will!
[*They kneel.*
Q. A mother's blessing be upon you, sirs! [*Exit.*
Ros. (*both rising*). Now, Guildenstern, apply thee to this task.

Music. *Enter* HAMLET. *He stalks to chair, throws himself into it.*

Ham. To be—or not to be!
Ros. Yes—that's the question—
Whether he's bravest who will cut his throat
Rather than suffer all——
Guild. Or suffer all
Rather than cut his throat?
Ham. (*annoyed at interruption, says,* "Go away—go away!" *then resumes*). To die—to sleep——
Ros. It's nothing more—Death is but sleep spun out—
Why hesitate? [*Offers him a dagger.*
Guild. The only question is
Between the choice of deaths, which death to choose.
[*Offers a revolver.*

Ham. (*in great terror*). Do take those dreadful things away. They make
My blood run cold. Go away—go away! (*They turn aside.* HAMLET *resumes*). To sleep, perchance to——
Ros. Dream.
That's very true. I never dream myself,
But Guildenstern dreams all night long out loud.
Guild. (*coming down and kneeling*). With blushes, sir, I do confess it true!
Ham. This question, gentlemen, concerns me not.
(*Resumes.*) For who would bear the whips and scorns of time——
Ros. (*as guessing a riddle*). *Who'd* bear the whips and scorns? Now, let me see.
Who'd *bear* them, eh?
Guild. (*same business*). Who'd bear the *scorns* of time?
Ros. (*correcting him*). The *whips* and scorns.
Guild. The whips and scorns, of course.
[HAMLET *about to protest.*
Don't tell us—let us guess—the *whips* of time?
Ham. Oh, sirs, this interruption likes us not.
I pray you give it up.
Ros. My lord, we do.
We cannot tell *who* bears these whips and scorns:
Ham. (*not heeding them, resumes*). But that the dread of something *after* death——
Ros. That's true—*post mortem* and the coroner—
Felo-de-se—cross roads at twelve P.M.—
And then the forfeited life policy—
Exceedingly unpleasant.
Ham. (*really angry*). Gentlemen,
It must be patent to the merest dunce
Three persons can't soliloquize at once!
[ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN *retire,* GUILDENSTERN *goes off.*
(*Aside.*) They're playing on me! Playing upon *me*
Who am not fashioned to be played upon!
Show them a pipe—a thing of holes and stops
Made to be played on—and they'll shrink abashed
And swear they have not skill on *that!* Now mark——
(*Aloud.*) Rosencrantz! Here!
[*Producing a flute as* ROSENCRANTZ *comes.*
This is a well-toned flute;
Play me an air upon it. Do not say
You know not *how!* (*Sneeringly.*)

Ros. Nay, but I *do* know how.
I'm rather good upon the flute—Observe——
[*Plays eight bars of hornpipe, then politely returns flute to* HAMLET.
Ham. (*peevishly*). Oh, thankye. (*Aside.*) Everything goes wrong!
[*Retires, and throws himself on dais, as if buried in soliloquy.*

Enter OPHELIA, *white with terror, holding a heavy MS.*

Oph. Rosencrantz!
Ros. Well?
Oph. (*in a stage-whisper*). I've found the manuscript,
But never put me to such work again!
Ros. Why, what has happened that you tremble so?
Oph. Last night I stole down from my room alone
And sought my father's den. I entered it!
The clock struck twelve, and then—oh, horrible!—
From chest and cabinet there issued forth
The mouldy spectres of five thousand plays,
All dead and gone—and many of them damned!
I shook with horror! They encompassed me,
Chattering forth the scenes and parts of scenes
Which my poor father wisely had cut out.
Oh, horrible—oh, 'twas most horrible!
[*Covering her face.*
Ros. What was't they uttered?
Oph. (*severely*). I decline to say.
The more I heard the more convinced was I
My father acted *most judiciously;*
Let that suffice thee.
Ros. Give me, then, the play,
And I'll submit it to the Prince.
Oph. (*crossing to him*). But stay,
Do not appear to urge him—hold him back,
Or he'll decline to play the piece—I know him.
Ham. (*who has been soliloquizing under his breath*).
And lose the name of action! (*Rises and comes down.*)
Why, what's that?
Ros. We have been looking through some dozen plays
To find one suited to our company.
This is, my lord, a five-act tragedy.
'Tis called "Gonzago"—but it will not serve—
'Tis very long.

Ham. Is there a part for *me*?
Oph. There is, my lord, a most important part—
A mad Archbishop who becomes a Jew
To spite his diocese.
Ham. That's very good!
Ros. (*turning over the pages*). Here you go mad—and then, soliloquize:
Here you are the sane again—and then you don't:
Then, later on, you stab your aunt, because——
Well, I can't tell you *why* you stab your aunt,
But still—you stab her.
Ham. That is quite enough.
Ros. Then you become the leader of a troop
Of Greek banditti—and soliloquize——
After a long and undisturbed career
Of murder (tempered by soliloquy)
You see the sin and folly of your ways
And offer to resume your diocese;
But, just too late—for, terrible to tell,
As you're repenting (in soliloquy)
The Bench of Bishops seize you unawares
And blow you from a gun!
[*During this* HAMLET *has acted in pantomime the scenes described.*
Ham. (*excitedly*). That's excellent.
That's very good indeed—we'll play this piece!
[*Taking MS. from* ROSENCRANTZ.
Oph. But, pray consider—all the other parts
Are insignificant.
Ham. What matters that?
We'll play this piece.
Ros. The plot's impossible,
And all the dialogue bombastic stuff.
Ham. I tell you, sir, that we will play this piece.
Bestir yourselves about it, and engage
All the most fairly famed tragedians
To play the small parts—as tragedians should.
A mad Archbishop! Yes, that's very good!
[*Picture.* HAMLET, *reading the MS., with limelight on him.* ROSENCRANTZ *at entrance,* OPHELIA *at entrance.*

THIRD TABLEAU.

March. Enter procession. First, two Pages, *who place themselves on each side of the platform; then* ROSENCRANTZ *and* OPHELIA; *then* GUILDENSTERN *and a* Lady; *then other* Courtiers; *then* POLONIUS, *backing before the* KING *and* QUEEN. *The* KING *sits, the* QUEEN *on his left,* OPHELIA *on his right,* ROSENCRANTZ *stands above her,* GUILDENSTERN *and* POLONIUS *behind the* KING *and* QUEEN; *the* Courtiers *right and left.*

Q. A fair good morrow to you, Rosencrantz.
How march the Royal revels?

Ros. Lamely, madam, lamely, like a one-legged duck. The Prince has discovered a strange play. He hath called it, "A Right Reckoning Long Delayed."

Cl. And of what fashion is the Prince's play?

Ros. 'Tis an excellent poor tragedy, my lord—a thing of shreds and patches welded into a form that hath mass without consistency, like an ill-built villa.

Q. But, sir, you should have used your best endeavours
To wean his phantasy from such a play.

Ros. Madam, I did, and with some success, for he now seeth the absurdity of its tragical catastrophes, and laughs at it as freely as we do. So, albeit the poor author had hoped to have drawn tears of sympathy, the Prince has resolved to present it as a piece of pompous folly intended to excite no loftier emotion than laughter and surprise. Here comes the Royal Tragedian with his troop.

Enter HAMLET *and* Players.

Ham. Good morrow, sir. This is our company of players. They have come to town to do honour and add completeness to our revels.

Cl. Good sirs, we welcome you to Elsinore.
Prepare you now—we are agog to taste
The intellectual treat in store for us.

Ham. We are ready, sir. But, before we begin, I would speak a word to you who are to play this piece. I have chosen this play in the face of sturdy opposition from my well-esteemed friends, who were for playing a piece with less bombastick fury

and more frolick. (*Addressing* KING.) But I have thought this a fit play to be presented by reason of that very pedantical bombast and windy obtrusive rhetorick that they do rightly despise. For I hold that there is no such antick fellow as your bombastical hero who doth so earnestly spout forth his folly as to make his hearers believe that he is unconscious of all incongruity; whereas, he who doth so mark, label, and underscore his antick speeches as to show that he is alive to their absurdity seemeth to utter them under protest, and to take part with his audience against himself. (*Turning to* Players.) For which reason, I pray you, let there be no huge red noses, nor extravagant monstrous wigs, nor coarse men garbed as women, in this comi-tragedy; for such things are as much as to say, "I am a comick fellow—I pray you laugh at me, and hold what I say to be cleverly ridiculous." Such labelling of humour is an impertinence to your audience, for it seemeth to imply that they are unable to recognize a joke unless it be pointed out to them. I pray you avoid it.

[*Slight applause, which* HAMLET *acknowledges.*

First Player. Sir, we are beholden to you for your good counsels. But we would urge upon your consideration that we are accomplished players, who have spent many years in learning our profession; and we would venture to suggest that it would better befit your lordship to confine yourself to such matters as your lordship may be likely to understand. We, on our part, may have our own ideas as to the duties of heirs-apparent; but it would ill become us to air them before your lordship, who may be reasonably supposed to understand such matters more perfectly than your very humble servants.

[*All applaud vigorously.* HAMLET *about to explode in anger.* KING *interrupts him.* HAMLET *thinks better of it, and angrily beckons* Players *to follow him. He and they exeunt.*

Cl. Come, let us take our places. Gather round
That all may see this fooling. Here's a chair
In which I shall find room to roll about
When laughter takes possession of my soul.
Now we are ready.

Enter on platform a Loving Couple. *Applause.*

She. Shouldst thou prove faithless?
He. . . . . . If I do . . . . . .
Then let the world forget to woo (*kneeling*),
The mountaintops bow down in fears,
The midday sun dissolve in tears,

And outraged nature, pale and bent,
Fall prostrate in bewilderment!

[*All titter through this—breaking into a laugh at the end, the* KING *enjoying it more than any one.*

Oph. Truly, sir, I hope he will prove faithful, lest we should all be involved in this catastrophe!

Cl. (*laughing*). Much, indeed, depends upon his constancy. I am sure he hath all our prayers, gentlemen! (*To* ROSENCRANTZ.) Is this play well known?

Ros. (*advancing*). It is not, my lord.

[*Turns back to* OPHELIA.

Cl. Ha! I seem to have met with these lines before. Go on.

She. Hark, dost thou hear those trumpets and those drums?
Thy hated rival, stern Gonzago, comes!

[*Exeunt* Loving Couple. *Laughter, as before.*

Q. And wherefore cometh Gonzago?

Ros. He cometh here to woo!

Q. Cannot he woo without an orchestra at his elbow? A fico for such a wooing, say I!

Cl. (*rather alarmed—aside to* ROSENCRANTZ). Who *is* Gonzago?

Ros. He's a mad Archbishop of Elsinore. 'Tis a most ridiculous and mirthful character—and the more so for that the poor author had hoped to have appalled you with his tragedical end! [*Returns to* OPHELIA.

[*During this the* KING *has shown that he has recognized his tragedy. He is horrified at the discovery.*

Enter HAMLET, *as Archbishop, with a robe and mitre. All laugh and applaud except the* KING, *who is miserable.*

Ham. Free from the cares of Church and State
I come to wreak my love and hate.
Love whirls me to the lofty skies—
Hate drags me where dark Pluto lies!

[*All laugh except* KING.

Q. Marry, but he must have a nice time of it between them! Oh, sir, this passeth the bounds of ridicule, and to think that these lines were to have drawn our tears!

Oph. Truly mine eyes run with tears, but they are begotten of laughter!

Ham. Gently, gently. Spare your ridicule, lest you have none left for the later scenes. The tragedy is full of such

windy fooling. You shall hear more anon. There are five acts of this! (*All groan.*)

(*Resumes*) For two great ends I daily fume—
The altar and the deadly tomb.
How can I live in such a state
And hold my Arch-Episcopate?"

Ros. (*exhausted with laughter*). Oh, my lord—I pray you end this, or I shall die with laughter!

Q. (*ditto*). Did mortal ever hear such metrical folly! Stop it, my good lord, or I shall assuredly do myself some injury.

Oph. (*ditto*). Oh, sir—prythee have mercy on us—we have laughed till we can laugh no more!

Ham. The drollest scene is coming now. Listen.

Cl. (*rises*). Stop! [*All start.*
Stop, I say—cast off those mummeries!
Come hither, Hamlet!

Ham. (*takes off robes*). Why, what ails you, sir?

Cl. (*with suppressed fury*). Know'st thou who wrote this play?

Ham. Not I, indeed.
Nor do I care to know!

Cl. *I* wrote this play—
To mention it is death, by Denmark's law!

Q. (*kneeling*). Oh, spare him, for he is thine only child!

Cl. No—I have two (QUEEN *horrified.*)—my son—my play—both worthless!
Both shall together perish!
[*Draws dagger;* QUEEN *endeavours to restrain him.*

Ham. (*on his knees*). Hold thine hand!
I can't bear death—I'm a philosopher!

Cl. That's true. But how shall we dispose of him?
[*All puzzled.*

Oph. (*suddenly*). A thought!
There is a certain isle beyond the sea
Where dwell a cultured race—compared with whom
We are but poor brain-blind barbarians;
'Tis known as Engle-land. Oh, send him there!
If but the half I've heard of them be true
They will enshrine him on their great good hearts,
And men will rise or sink in good esteem
According as they worship him, or slight him!

Cl. Well, we're dull dogs in Denmark. It may be
That we've misjudged him. If such race there be—

(There may be—I am not a well-read man)
They're welcome to his philosophic brain—
So, Hamlet, get thee gone—and don't come back again!

[CLAUDIUS *crosses to* R. HAMLET, *who is delighted at the suggestion, crosses to* QUEEN *and embraces her. He then embraces* OPHELIA, *who receives his kiss with marked coldness. Then he turns up on to platform, and strikes an attitude, exclaiming,* "To Engle-land!" *At the same moment* ROSENCRANTZ *embraces* OPHELIA. *Picture.*

CURTAIN.

PATIENCE;

OR,

BUNTHORNE'S BRIDE.

AN ENTIRELY NEW AND ORIGINAL ÆSTHETIC OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

First produced at the Opera Comique, London, on Saturday, April 23rd, 1881, *under the management of* MR. R. D'OYLY CARTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COLONEL CALVERLEY
MAJOR MURGATROYD
LIEUT. THE DUKE OF DUNSTABLE } *Officers of Dragoon Guards.*

REGINALD BUNTHORNE, *a Fleshly Poet.*

ARCHIBALD GROSVENOR, *an Idyllic Poet.*

MR. BUNTHORNE'S SOLICITOR.

Chorus of Officers of Dragoon Guards.

THE LADY ANGELA
THE LADY SAPHIR
THE LADY ELLA
THE LADY JANE } *Rapturous Maidens.*

PATIENCE, *a Dairy Maid.*

Chorus of Rapturous Maidens.

ACT I.

EXTERIOR OF CASTLE BUNTHORNE.

ACT II.

A GLADE.

PATIENCE;

OR,

BUNTHORNE'S BRIDE.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Exterior of Castle Bunthorne. Entrance to castle by draw-bridge over moat. Young* Ladies *dressed in æsthetic draperies are grouped about the stage. They play on lutes, mandolines, etc., as they sing, and all are in the last stage of despair.* ANGELA, ELLA, *and* SAPHIR *lead them.*

CHORUS.

Twenty love-sick maidens we,
Love-sick all against our will.
Twenty years hence we shall be,
Twenty love-sick maidens still!

SOLO.—ANGELA.

Love feeds on hope, they say, or love will die—
All. Ah, miserie!
Yet my love lives, although no hope have I!
All. Ah, miserie!
Alas, poor heart, go hide thyself away—
All. Ah, miserie!
To weeping concords tune thy roundelay!
All. Ah, miserie!

CHORUS.

All our love is all for one,
Yet that love he heedeth not,
He is coy and cares for none,
Sad and sorry is our lot!
Ah, miserie!

SOLO.—ELLA.

Go, breaking heart,
  Go, dream of love requited!
Go, foolish heart,
  Go, dream of lovers plighted;
Go, madcap heart,
  Go, dream of never waking;
And in thy dream
  Forget that thou art breaking!

All. Ah, miserie!

Ang. There is a strange magic in this love of ours! Rivals as we all are in the affections of our Reginald, the very hopelessness of our love is a bond that binds us to one another!

Saph. Jealousy is merged in misery. While he, the very cynosure of our eyes and hearts remains icy insensible—what have we to strive for?

Ella. The love of maidens is, to him, as interesting as the taxes!

Saph. Would that it were! He pays his taxes.

Ang. And cherishes the receipts!

Enter LADY JANE.

Jane (*suddenly*). Fools!

Ang. I beg your pardon?

Jane. Fools and blind! The man loves—wildly loves!

Ang. But whom? None of us!

Jane. No, none of us. His weird fancy has lighted, for the nonce, on Patience—the village milkmaid!

Saph. On, Patience? Oh, it cannot be!

Jane. Bah! But yesterday I caught him in her dairy, eating fresh butter with a table-spoon. To-day he is not well!

Saph. But Patience boasts that she has never loved—that love is, to her, a sealed book! Oh, he cannot be serious.

Jane. 'Tis but a fleeting fancy—'twill quickly pass away. (*Aside.*) Oh, Reginald, if you but knew what a wealth of golden love is waiting for you, stored up in this rugged old bosom of mine, the milkmaid's triumph would be short indeed!

[*All sigh wearily.*

[PATIENCE *appears on an eminence. She looks down with pity on the despondent* Ladies.

RECITATIVE.

Pa. Still brooding on their mad infatuation!
  I thank thee, Love, thou comest not to me;
Far happier I, free from thy ministration,
  Than dukes or duchesses who love, can be!

Saph. (*looking up*). 'Tis Patience—happy girl! Loved by a Poet!
Pa. Your pardon, ladies. I intrude upon you! (*Going.*)
Ang. Nay, pretty child, come hither. Is it true
That you have never loved?
Pa. Most true indeed.
Sopranos. Most marvellous!
Contraltos. And most deplorable!

SONG.—PATIENCE.

I cannot tell what this love may be
That cometh to all but not to me.
It cannot be kind as they'd imply,
Or why do these gentle ladies sigh?
It cannot be joy and rapture deep,
Or why do these gentle ladies weep?
It cannot be blissful, as 'tis said,
Or why are their eyes so wondrous red?

Though everywhere true love I see
A-coming to all, but not to me,
I cannot tell what this love may be!
For I am blithe and I am gay,
While they sit sighing all night, all day.
Think of the gulf 'twixt them and me,
"Fal la la la!"—and "Miserie!"

Chorus. Yes, she is blithe, etc.

Pa. If love is a thorn, they show no wit
Who foolishly hug and foster it.
If love is a weed, how simple they
Who gather and gather it, day by day!
If love is a nettle that makes you smart,
Why do you wear it next your heart?
And if it be none of these, say I,
Why do you sit and sob and sigh?
Though everywhere, etc.

Chorus. For she is blithe, etc.

Ang. Ah, Patience, if you have never loved, you have never known true happiness! (*All sigh.*)

Pa. But the truly happy always seem to have so much on their minds. The truly happy never seem quite well.

Jane. There is a transcendentality of delirium—an acute accentuation of supremest ecstacy—which the earthy might easily mistake for indigestion. But it is *not* indigestion—it is æsthetic transfiguration! (*To the others.*) Enough of babble. Come!

Pa. But I have some news for you. The 35th Dragoon

Guards have halted in the village, and are even now on their way to this very spot.

Ang. The 35th Dragoon Guards!

Saph. They are fleshly men, of full habit!

Ella. We care nothing for Dragoon Guards!

Pa. But, bless me, you were all in love with them a year ago!

Saph. A year ago!

Ang. My poor child, you don't understand these things. A year ago they were very well in our eyes, but since then our tastes have been etherealized, our perceptions exalted. (*To the others.*) Come! it is time to lift up our voices in morning carol to our Reginald. Let us to his door.

[*The* Ladies *go off two and two into the Castle, singing refrain of "Twenty love-sick maidens we," and accompanying themselves on harps and mandolins.* PATIENCE *watches them in surprise, as she climbs the rock by which she entered.*

March. *Enter* Officers of Dragoon Guards, *led by* MAJOR.

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

The soldiers of our Queen
Are linked in friendly tether;
Upon the battle scene
They fight the foe together.
There every mother's son
Prepared to fight and fall is;
The enemy of one
The enemy of all is!

Enter COLONEL.

SONG.—COLONEL.

If you want a receipt for that popular mystery,
Known to the world as a Heavy Dragoon,
Take all the remarkable people in history,
Rattle them off to a popular tune.
The pluck of Lord Nelson on board of the Victory—
Genius of Bismarck devising a plan;
The humour of Fielding (which sounds contradictory)—
Coolness of Paget about to trepan—
The science of Jullien, the eminent musico—
Wit of Macaulay, who wrote of Queen Anne—
The pathos of Paddy, as rendered by Boucicault—
Style of the Bishop of Sodor and Man—
The dash of a D'Orsay, divested of quackery—
Narrative powers of Dickens and Thackeray—
Victor Emmanuel—peak-haunting Peveril—
Thomas Aquinas, and Doctor Sacheverell—
Tupper and Tennyson—Daniel Defoe—
Anthony Trollope and Mr. Guizot!

Take of these elements all that is fusible,
Melt them all down in a pipkin or crucible,
Set them to simmer and take off the scum,
And a Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

Chorus. Yes! yes! yes! yes!
A Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

Col. If you want a receipt for this soldierlike paragon,
Get at the wealth of the Czar (if you can)—
The family pride of a Spaniard from Arragon—
Force of Mephisto pronouncing a ban—
A smack of Lord Waterford, reckless and rollicky—
Swagger of Roderick, heading his clan—
The keen penetration of Paddington Pollaky—
Grace of an Odalisque on a divan,
The genius strategic of Cæsar or Hanibal—
Skill of Sir Garnet in thrashing a cannibal—
Flavour of Hamlet—the Stranger, a touch of him—
Little of Manfred (but not very much of him)—
Beadle of Burlington—Richardson's show—
Mr. Micawber and Madame Tussaud!
Take of these elements all that is fusible—
Melt 'em all down in a pipkin or crucible—
Set 'em to simmer and take off the scum,
And a Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

All. Yes! yes! yes! yes!
A Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

Col. Well, here we are again on the scene of our former triumphs. But where's the Duke?

Enter DUKE, *listlessly, and in low spirits.*

Duke. Here I am! (*Sighs.*)

Col. Come, cheer up, don't give way!

Duke. Oh, for that, I'm as cheerful as a poor devil can be expected to be, who has the misfortune to be a duke, with a thousand a day!

Maj. Humph! Most men would envy you!

Duke. Envy *me*? Tell me, Major, are you fond of toffee?

Maj. Very!

Col. We are all fond of toffee.

All. We are!

Duke. Yes, and toffee in moderation is a capital thing. But to *live* on toffee—toffee for breakfast, toffee for dinner, toffee for tea—to have it supposed that you care for nothing *but* toffee, and that you would consider yourself insulted if anything but toffee were offered to you—how would you like *that*?

Col. I can believe that, under those circumstances, even toffee would become monotonous.

Duke. For "toffee" read flattery, adulation, and abject

deference, carried to such a pitch that I began, at last, to think that man was born bent at an angle of forty-five degrees! Great heavens, what is there to adulate in me! Am I particularly intelligent, or remarkably studious, or excruciatingly witty, or unusually accomplished, or exceptionally virtuous?

Col. You're about as commonplace a young man as ever I saw.

All. You are!

Duke. Exactly! That's it exactly! That describes me to a T! Thank you all very much! Well, I couldn't stand it any longer so I joined this regiment. In the army, thought I, I shall be occasionally snubbed, perhaps even bullied, who knows? The thought was rapture, and here I am.

Col. (*looking off*). Yes, and here are the ladies!

Duke. But who is the gentleman with the long hair?

Col. I don't know.

Duke. He seems popular!

Col. He *does* seem popular!

BUNTHORNE *enters, followed by* Ladies, *two and two, singing and playing on harps as before. He is composing a poem and quite absorbed. He sees no one, but walks across stage, followed by* Ladies. *They take no notice of* Dragoons—*to the surprise and indignation of those* Officers.

CHORUS OF LADIES.

In a melancholy train
Two and two we walk all day—
Pity those who love in vain
None so sorrowful as they
Who can only sigh and say,
Woe is me, alackaday!

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

Now is not this ridiculous—and is not this preposterous?
A thorough-paced absurdity—explain it if you can.
Instead of rushing eagerly to cherish us and foster us,
They all prefer this melancholy literary man.
Instead of slyly peering at us,
Casting looks endearing at us,
Blushing at us, flushing at us—flirting with a fan;
They're actually sneering at us, fleering at us, jeering at us!
Pretty sort of treatment for a military man!
Pretty sort of treatment for a military man!

Ang. Mystic poet, hear our prayer,
Twenty love-sick maidens we—
Young and wealthy, dark and fair—
And we die for love of thee!

Yes, we die for love of thee—
Twenty love-sick maidens we!

Bun. (*aside—slyly*). Though my book I seem to scan,
In a rapt ecstatic way,
Like a literary man
Who despises female clay;
I hear plainly all they say,
Twenty love-sick maidens they!

Officers (*to each other*). He hears plainly, **etc.**

Ella. Though so excellently wise,
For a moment mortal be,
Deign to raise thy purple eyes
From thy heart-drawn poesy.
Twenty love-sick maidens see—
Each is kneeling on her knee! (*All kneel.*)

Cho. of Ladies. Twenty love-sick, etc.

Bun. (*aside*). Though as I remarked before,
Any one convinced would be
That some transcendental lore
Is monopolizing me,
Round the corner I can see
Each is kneeling on her knee!

Officers (*to each other*). Round the corner, **etc.**

ENSEMBLE.

OFFICERS.	LADIES.	BUNTHORNE (*aside*).
Now is not this ridiculous, etc.	Mystic poet, hear our prayers, etc.	Though my book I seem to scan, etc.

Col. Angela! what is the meaning of this?

Ang. Oh, sir, leave us; our minds are but ill-attuned to light love-talk.

Maj. But what in the world has come over you all?

Jane. Bunthorne! *He* has come over us. He has come among us, and he has idealized us.

Duke. Has he succeeded in idealizing *you?*

Jane. He has!

Duke. Bravo, Bunthorne!

Jane. My eyes are open; I droop despairingly; I am soulfully intense; I am limp, and I cling!

[*During this* BUNTHORNE *is seen in all the agonies of composition. The* Ladies *are watching him intently as he writhes. At last, he hits on the word he wants and writes it down. A general sense of relief.*

Bun. Finished! At last! Finished!

[*He staggers, overcome with the mental strain, into arms of* COLONEL.

Col. Ar you better now?

Bun. Yes—oh, it's you—I am better now. The poem is finished, and my soul had gone out into it. That was all. It was nothing worth mentioning, it occurs three times a day. (*Sees* PATIENCE, *who has entered during this scene.*) Ah, Patience! Dear Patience! (*Holds her hand; she seems frightened.*)

Ang. Will it please you read it to us, sir?

Saph. This we supplicate. (*All kneel.*)

Bun. Shall I?

All the Dragoons. No!

Bun. (*annoyed—to* PATIENCE). I will read it if *you* bid me!

Pa. (*much frightened*). You can if you like!

Bun. It is a wild, weird, fleshly thing; yet very tender, very yearning, very precious. It is called, "Oh, Hollow! Hollow! Hollow!"

Pa. Is it a hunting song?

Bun. A hunting song? No, it is *not* a hunting song. It is the wail of the poet's heart on discovering that everything is commonplace. To understand it, cling passionately to one another and think of faint lilies. (*They do so, as he recites.*)

"OH, HOLLOW! HOLLOW! HOLLOW!

What time the poet hath hymned
The writhing maid, lithe-limbed,
  Quivering on amaranthine asphodel,
How can he paint her woes,
Knowing, as well he knows,
  That all can be set right with calomel?

When from the poet's plinth
The amorous colocynth
  Yearns for the aloe, faint with rapturous thrills,
How can he hymn their throes
Knowing, as well he knows,
  That they are only uncompounded pills?

Is it, and can it be,
Nature hath this decree,
  Nothing poetic in the world shall dwell?
Or that in all her works
Something poetic lurks,
  Even in colocynth and calomel?
    I cannot tell.

Ang. How purely fragrant!

Saph. How earnestly precious!

Duke. Well, it seems to me to be nonsense.

Saph. Nonsense; yes, perhaps—but, oh, what precious nonsense!

All. Ah!

Col. This is all very well; but you seem to forget that you are engaged to us!

Saph. It can never be. You are not Empyrean. You are not Della Cruscan. You are not even Early English. Oh, be Early English ere it is too late! (Officers *look at each other in astonishment.*)

Jane (*looking at uniform*). Red and yellow! Primary colours! Oh, South Kensington!

Duke. We didn't design our uniforms, but we don't see how they could be improved.

Jane. No, you wouldn't. Still there *is* a cobwebby grey velvet, with a tender bloom like cold gravy, which, made Florentine fourteenth century, trimmed with Venetian leather and Spanish altar lace, and surmounted with something Japanese—it matters not what—would at least be Early English! Come maidens.

[*Exeunt* Maidens, *two and two, singing, refrain of "Twenty love-sick maidens we." The* Officers *watch them off in astonishment.*

Duke. Gentlemen, this is an insult to the British uniform.

Col. A uniform that has been as successful in the courts of Venus as in the field of Mars!

SONG.—COLONEL.

When I first put this uniform on,
I said, as I looked in the glass,
"It's one to a million
That any civilian,
My figure and form will surpass.
Gold lace has a charm for the fair,
And I've plenty of that, and to spare,
While a lover's professions,
When uttered in Hessians,
Are eloquent everywhere!"
A fact that I counted upon,
When I first put this uniform on!

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

By a simple coincidence, few
Could ever have reckoned upon,
The same thing occurred to me, too,
When I first put this uniform on!

Col. I said, when I first put it on,
"It is plain to the veriest dunce
That every beauty
Will feel it her duty
To yield to its glamour at once.

They will see that I'm freely gold-laced
In a uniform handsome and chaste"—
But the peripatetics
Of long-haired æsthetics,
Are very much more to their taste—
Which I never counted upon
When I first put this uniform on!

Chs. By a simple coincidence, few
Could ever have counted upon,
I didn't anticipate that,
When I first put this uniform on!

[*The* Dragoons *go off angrily.*

[*As soon as he is alone,* BUNTHORNE *changes his manner and becomes intensely melodramatic.*

RECITATIVE AND SONG.—BUNTHORNE.

Am I alone,
And unobserved? I am!
Then let me own
I'm an æsthetic sham!
This air severe
Is but a mere
Veneer
This cynic smile
Is but a wile
Of guile!
This costume chaste
Is but good taste
Misplaced!

Let me confess!
A languid love for lilies does *not* blight me!
Lank limbs and haggard cheeks do *not* delight me!
I do *not* care for dirty greens
By any means.
I do *not* long for all one sees
That's Japanese.
I am *not* fond of uttering platitudes
In stained-glass attitudes.
In short, my mediævalism's affectation,
Born of a morbid love of admiration!

SONG.

If you're anxious for to shine in the high æsthetic line as a man of culture rare,
You must get up all the germs of the transcendental terms, and plant them everywhere.

You must lie upon the daisies, and discourse in novel phrases of your
complicated state of mind,
The meaning doesn't matter if it's only idle chatter of a transcendental
kind.
And every one will say,
As you walk your mystic way,
"If this young man expresses himself in terms too deep for *me*,
Why what a very singularly deep young man this deep young man
must be!"

Be eloquent in praise of the very dull old days which have long since
passed away,
And convince 'em, if you can, that the reign of good Queen Anne was
Culture's palmiest day.
Of course you will pooh-pooh whatever's fresh and new, and declare
it's crude and mean,
For Art stopped short in the cultivated court of the Empress Josephine.
And every one will say,
As you walk your mystic way,
"If that's not good enough for him which is good enough for *me*,
Why what a very cultivated kind of youth this kind of youth must be!"

Then a sentimental passion of a vegetable fashion must excite your
languid spleen,
An attachment *à la* Plato for a bashful young potato, or a not-too-
French French bean!
Though the Philistines may jostle, you will rank as an apostle in the
high æsthetic band,
If you walk down Piccadilly with a poppy or a lily in your mediæval
hand.
And every one will say,
As you walk your flowery way,
"If he's content with a vegetable love, which would certainly not
suit *me*,
Why what a most particularly pure young man this pure young man
must be!"

At the end of his song PATIENCE *enters.* *He sees her.*

Bun. Ah! Patience, come hither. I am pleased with thee. The bitter-hearted one, who finds all else hollow, is pleased with thee. For you are not hollow. *Are* you?

Pa. I beg your pardon—I interrupt you.

Bun. Life is made up of interruptions. The tortured soul, yearning for solitude, writhes under them. Oh, but my heart is a-weary! Oh, I am a cursed thing! Don't go.

Pa. Really, I'm very sorry—

Bun. Tell me, girl, do you ever yearn?

Pa. (*misunderstanding him*). I earn my living.

Bun. (*impatiently*). No, no! Do you know what it is to be heart-hungry? Do you know what it is to yearn for the

Indefinable, and yet to be brought face to face, daily, with the Multiplication Table? Do you know what it is to seek oceans and to find puddles?—to long for whirlwinds and to have to do the best you can with the bellows? That's my case. Oh, I am a cursed thing!

Pa. If you please, I don't understand you—you frighten me!

Bun. Don't be frightened—it's only poetry.

Pa. If that's poetry, I don't like poetry.

Bun. (*eagerly*). Don't you? (*Aside.*) Can I trust her? (*Aloud.*) Patience, you don't like poetry—well, between you and me, *I* don't like poetry. It's hollow, unsubstantial—unsatisfactory. What's the use of yearning for Elysian Fields when you know you can't get 'em, and would only let 'em out on building leases if you had 'em?

Pa. Sir, I——

Bun. Don't go. Patience, I have long loved you—let me tell you a secret. I am not as bilious as I look. If you like I will cut my hair. There is more innocent fun within me than a casual spectator would imagine. You have never seen me frolicsome. Be a good girl—a very good girl—and you shall.

Pa. Sir, I will speak plainly. In the matter of love I am untaught, I have never loved but my great-aunt. But I am quite certain that, under any circumstances, I couldn't possibly love *you.*

Bun. Oh, you think not?

Pa. I'm quite sure of it. Quite sure. Quite.

Bun. (*releasing her*). Very good. Life is henceforth a blank. I don't care what becomes of me. I have only to ask that you will not abuse my confidence; though *you* despise me, I am extremely popular with the other young ladies.

Pa. I only ask that you will leave me and never renew the subject.

Bun. Certainly. Broken-hearted and desolate I go. (*Recites.*)

> "Oh, to be wafted away
> From this black Aceldama of sorrow,
> Where the dust of an earthy to-day
> Is the earth of a dusty to-morrow!"

It is a little thing of my own. I call it "Heart Foam." I shall not publish it. Farewell! [*Exit* BUNTHORNE.

Pa. What on earth does it all mean? Why does he love me? Why does he expect me to love him? He's not a relation! It frightens me!

Enter ANGELA.

Ang. Why, Patience, what is the matter?

Pa. Lady Angela, tell me two things. Firstly, what on earth is this love that upsets everybody; and secondly, how is it to be distinguished from insanity?

Ang. Poor blind girl! Oh, forgive her, Eros! Why, love is of all passions the most essential! It is the embodiment of purity, the abstraction of refinement; it is the one unselfish emotion in this whirlpool of grasping greed!

Pa. Oh dear, oh! (*Beginning to cry.*)

Ang. Why are you crying?

Pa. To think that I have lived all these years without having experienced this ennobling and unselfish passion! Why, what a wicked girl I must be! For it *is* unselfish, isn't it?

Ang. Absolutely. Love that is tainted with selfishness is no love. Oh, try, try, try to love! It really isn't difficult if you give your whole mind to it.

Pa. I'll set about it at once. I won't go to bed until I'm head over ears in love with somebody.

Ang. Noble girl. But is it possible that you have never loved anybody?

Pa. Yes, one.

Ang. Ah, whom?

Pa. My great-aunt.

Ang. Your great-aunt doesn't count.

Pa. Then there's nobody. At least—no, nobody. Not since I was a baby. But *that* don't count, I suppose.

Ang. I don't know—tell me all about it.

DUET.—PATIENCE AND ANGELA.

Pa. Long years ago, fourteen, maybe,
When but a tiny babe of four,
Another baby played with me,
My elder by a year or more.
A little child of beauty rare,
With marvellous eyes and wondrous hair.
Who, in my child-eyes, seemed to me
All that a little child should be!
Ah, how we loved, that child and I,
How pure our baby joy!
How true our love—and, by-the-by,
He was a little boy!

Ang. Ah, old, old tale of Cupid's touch!
I thought as much—I thought as much!
He *was* a little boy!

Pa. (*shocked*). Pray don't misconstrue what I say—
Remember, pray—remember, pray,
He was a *little* boy!

Ang. No doubt, yet spite of all your pains,
The interesting fact remains—
He was a little *boy!*

ENSEMBLE.

Ah, yes / No doubt } in spite of all { my / her } pains, etc.

[*Exit* ANGELA.

Pa. It's perfectly appalling to think of the dreadful state I must be in! I had no idea that love was a duty. No wonder they all look so unhappy. Upon my word, I hardly like to associate with myself. I don't think I'm respectable. I'll go at once and fall in love with——.

Enter GROSVENOR.

Pa. A stranger!

DUET.—PATIENCE AND GROSVENOR.

Gros. Prithee, pretty maiden—prithee tell me true,
(Hey, but I'm doleful, willow willow waly!)
Have you e'er a lover a dangling after you?
Hey willow waly O!
I would fain discover
If you have a lover?
Hey willow waly O!

Pa. Gentle sir, my heart is frolicsome and free—
(Hey, but he's doleful, willow willow waly!)
Nobody I care for comes a courting me—
Hey willow waly O!
Nobody I care for
Comes a courting—therefore,
Hey willow waly O!

Gros. Prithee, pretty maiden, will you marry me?
(Hey, but I'm hopeful, willow willow waly!)
I may say, at once, I'm a man of propertee—
Hey willow waly O!
Money, I despise it,
But many people prize it,
Hey willow waly O!

Pa. Gentle sir, although to marry I design—
(Hey, but he's hopeful—willow willow waly!)
As yet I do not know you, and so I must decline.
Hey willow waly O!

To other maidens go you—
As yet I do not know you,
Hey willow waly O!

Gros. Patience! Can it be that you don't recognize me?

Pa. Recognize you? No, indeed I don't!

Gros. Have fifteen years so greatly changed me?

Pa. Fifteen years? What do you mean?

Gros. Have you forgotten the friend of your youth, your Archibald?—your little playfellow? Oh, Chronos, Chronos, this is too bad of you!

Pa. Archibald! Is it possible? Why, let me look! It is! It is! It must be! Oh, how happy I am! I thought we should never meet again! And how you've grown!

Gros. Yes, Patience, I am much taller and much stouter than I was.

Pa. And how you've improved!

Gros. Yes, Patience, I am very beautiful! (*Sighs.*)

Pa. But surely *that* doesn't make you unhappy?

Gros. Yes, Patience. Gifted as I am with a beauty which probably has not its rival on earth—I am, nevertheless, utterly and completely miserable.

Pa. Oh, but why?

Gros. My child-love for you has never faded. Conceive, then, the horror of my situation when I tell you that it is my hideous destiny to be madly loved by every woman I come across!

Pa. But why do you make yourself so picturesque? Why not disguise yourself, disfigure yourself, anything to escape this persecution?

Gros. No, Patience, that may not be. These gifts—irksome as they are—have been confided to me for the enjoyment and delectation of my fellow-creatures. I am a trustee for Beauty, and it is my duty to see that the conditions of my trust are faithfully discharged.

Pa. And you, too, are a Poet?

Gros. Yes, I am the Apostle of Simplicity. I am called "Archibald the All-right"—for I am infallible!

Pa. And is it possible that you condescend to love such a girl as I?

Gros. Yes, Patience, is it not strange? I have loved you with a Florentine fourteenth-century frenzy for full fifteen years!

Pa. Oh, marvellous! I have hitherto been deaf to the voice of love—I seem now to know what love is! It has been revealed to me—it is Archibald Grosvenor!

Gros. Yes, Patience, it is! (*Embrace.*)

Pa. (*as in a trance*). We will never, never part!

Gros. We will live and die together!

Pa. I swear it!

Gros. We both swear it! (*Embrace.*)

Pa. (*recoiling from him*). But—oh, horror!

Gros. What's the matter?

Pa. Why, you are perfection! A source of endless ecstasy to all who know you!

Gros. I know I am—well?

Pa. Then, bless my heart, there can be nothing unselfish in loving *you!*

Gros. Merciful powers, I never thought of that!

Pa. To monopolize those features on which all women love to linger! It would be unpardonable!

Gros. Why, so it would! Oh, fatal perfection, again you interpose between me and my happiness!

Pa. Oh, if you were but a thought less beautiful than you are!

Gros. Would that I were; but candour compels me to admit that I'm not!

Pa. Our duty is clear; we must part, and for ever!

Gros. Oh, misery! And yet I cannot question the propriety of your decision. Farewell, Patience!

Pa. Farewell, Archibald! But stay!

Gros. Yes, Patience?

Pa. Although I may not love *you*—for you are perfect—there is nothing to prevent your loving *me.* I am plain, homely, unattractive!

Gros. Why, that's true!

Pa. The love of such a man as you for such a girl as I must be unselfish!

Gros. Unselfishness itself!

DEUT.—PATIENCE AND GROSVENOR.

Pa. Though to marry you would very selfish be—
Gros. Hey, but I'm doleful—willow willow waly!
Pa. You may all the same continue loving me—
Gros. Hey, but I'm doleful—willow willow waly!
Both. All the world ignoring,
You / I'll } go on adoring—
Hey willow waly O!

[*At the end, exeunt despairingly, in opposite directions*

Enter BUNTHORNE, *crowned with roses and hung about with garlands, and looking very miserable. He is led by* ANGELA *and* SAPHIR (*each of whom holds an end of the rose-garland by which he is bound*), *and accompanied by procession of* Maidens. *They are dancing classically, and playing on cymbals, double pipes, and other archaic instruments.*

CHORUS.

Let the merry cymbals sound,
Gaily pipe Pandæan pleasure,
With a Daphnephoric bound
Tread a gay but classic measure.
Every heart with hope is beating,
For at this exciting meeting
Fickle Fortune will decide
Who shall be our Bunthorne's bride!

Enter Dragoons, *led by* COLONEL, MAJOR, *and* DUKE. *They are surprised at proceedings.*

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

Now tell us, we pray you,
Why thus you array you—
Oh, poet, how say you—
What is it you've done?

Duke. Of rite sacrificial,
By sentence judicial,
This seems the initial,
Then why don't you run?

Col. They cannot have led you,
To hang or behead you,
Nor may they *all* wed you,
Unfortunate one!

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

Then tell us, we pray you,
Why thus they array you—
Oh, poet, how say you—
What is it you've done?

RECITATIVE.—BUNTHORNE.

Heart-broken at my Patience's barbarity,
By the advice of my solicitor (*introducing his solicitor*),
In aid—in aid of a deserving charity,
I've put myself up to be raffled for!

Maidens. By the advice of his solicitor
He's put himself up to be raffled for!

Dragoons. Oh, horror! urged by his solicitor,
He's put himself up to be raffled for!

Maidens. Oh, Heaven's blessing on his solicitor!

Dragoons. A hideous curse on his solicitor!

[*The* Solicitor, *horrified at the* Dragoons' *curse, rushes off.*

Col. Stay, we implore you,
Before our hopes are blighted!
You see before you
The men to whom you're plighted!

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

Stay we implore you,
For we adore you;
To us you're plighted
To be united—
Stay we implore you!

SOLO.—DUKE.

Your maiden hearts, ah, do not steel
To pity's eloquent appeal,
Such conduct British soldiers feel.
(*Aside to* Dragoons.) Sigh, sigh, all sigh! [*They all sigh.*

To foeman's steel we rarely see
A British soldier bend the knee,
Yet, one and all, they kneel to ye—
(*Aside to* Dragoons.) Kneel, kneel, all kneel! [*They all kneel.*

Our soldiers very seldom cry,
And yet—I need not tell you why—
A tear-drop dews each martial eye!
(*Aside to* Dragoons.) Weep, weep, all weep! [*They all weep.*

ENSEMBLE.

Our soldiers very seldom cry
And yet—I need not tell you why—
A tear-drop dews each manly eye!
Weep, weep, all weep!

Bunthorne (*who has been impatient during the appeal*).
Come, walk up, and purchase with avidity,
Overcome your diffidence and natural timidity,
Tickets for the raffle should be purchased with avidity,
Put in half a guinea and a husband you may gain—
Such a judge of blue-and-white, and other kinds of pottery—
From early Oriental, down to modern terra-cotta-ry—
Put in half a guinea—you may draw him in a lottery—
Such an opportunity may not occur again.

Chorus. Such a judge of blue-and-white, etc.

[Maidens *crowd up to purchase tickets—during this* Dragoons *dance in single file round stage—to express their indifference.*

Dragoons. We've been thrown over, we're aware,
But we don't care—but we don't care!
There's fish in the sea, no doubt of it,
As good as ever came of it,
And some day we shall get our share,
So we don't care—so we don't care!

[*During this the* Girls *have been buying tickets. At last,* JANE *presents herself.* BUNTHORNE *looks at her with aversion.*

RECITATIVE.

Bun. And are *you* going, a ticket for to buy?
Jane (*surprised*). Most certainly I am; why should not I?
Bun. (*aside*). Oh, Fortune this is hard! (*Aloud.*) Blindfold your eyes;
Two minutes will decide who wins the prize!
[Girls *blindfold themselves.*

CHORUS OF MAIDENS.

Oh, Fortune, to my aching heart be kind;
Like us, thou art blindfolded, but not blind! (*Each uncovers one eye.*)
Just raise your bandage, thus, that you may see,
And give the prize, and give the prize to me! (*They cover their eyes again.*)

Bun. Come, Lady Jane, I pray you draw the first!
Jane (*joyfully*). He loves me best!
Bun. (*aside*). I want to know the worst!

[JANE *draws a paper, and is about to open it, when* PATIENCE *enters.* PATIENCE *snatches paper from* JANE *and tears it up.*

Pa. Hold! Stay your hand!
All (*uncovering their eyes*). What means this interference?
Of this bold girl I pray you make a clearance!
Jane. Away with you, and to your milk-pails go?
Bun. (*suddenly*). She wants a ticket! Take a dozen!!
Pa. No!

SOLO.—PATIENCE, *kneeling to* BUNTHORNE.

If there be pardon in your breast
For a poor penitent,
Who with remorseful thought oppress,
Sincerely doth repent.
If you, with one so lowly, still
Desire to be allied,
Then you may take me, if you will,
For I will be your bride!

All. Oh, shameless one!
Oh, boldfaced thing!
Away you run—
Go, take you wing,
You shameless one!
You boldfaced thing!

Bun. How strong is love! For many and many a week,
She's loved me fondly and has feared to speak
But Nature, for restraint too mighty far,
Has burst the bonds of Art—and here we are!

Pa. No, Mr. Bunthorne, no—you're wrong again,
Permit me—I'll endeavour to explain!

SONG.—PATIENCE.

True love must single-hearted be—
Bun. Exactly so!
Pa. From every selfish fancy free—
Bun. Exactly so!
Pa. No idle thought of gain or joy,
A maiden's fancy should employ—
True love must be without alloy.
All. Exactly so!

Pa. Imposture to contempt must lead—
Col. Exactly so!
Pa. Blind vanity's dissension's seed—
Maj. Exactly so!
Pa. It follows then, a maiden who
Devotes herself to loving *you* (*indicating* BUNTHORNE),
Is prompted by no selfish view!
All. Exactly so!

Saph. (*taking* BUNTHORNE *aside*). Are you resolved to wed this shameless one?

Ang. Is there no chance for any other?

Bun. (*decisively*). None!

[*Embraces* PATIENCE.

[ANGELA, SAPHIR, *and* ELLA *take* COLONEL, DUKE, *and* MAJOR *down, while* Girls *gaze fondly at other* Officers.

SESTETTE.

I hear the soft note of the echoing voice
Of an old old love, long dead—
It whispers my sorrowing heart "rejoice"—
For the last sad tear is shed—
The pain that is all but a pleasure we'll change
For the pleasure that's all but pain,
And never, oh, never, this heart will range
From that old old love again! [Girls *embrace* Officers.

Chorus. Yes, the pain that is all, etc. [*Embrace.*

[*As the* Dragoons *and* Girls *are embracing, enter* GROSVENOR, *reading. He takes no notice of them, but comes slowly down, still reading. The* Girls *are all strangely fascinated by him and gradually withdraw from* Dragoons.

Ang. But who is this, whose god-like grace
Proclaims he comes of noble race?
And who is this, whose manly face
Bears sorrow's interesting trace?

ENSEMBLE.—TUTTI.

Yes, who is this? etc.

Gros. I am a broken-hearted troubadour,
Whose mind's æsthetic, and whose tastes are pure!
Ang. Æsthetic! He is æsthetic!
Gros. Yes, yes—I am æsthetic
And poetic!
All the Ladies. Then, we love you!

[*The* Girls *leave* Dragoons *and group, kneeling, around* GROSVENOR. *Fury of* BUNTHORNE, *who recognizes a rival.*

Dragoons. They love him! Horror!
Bun. and Pa. They love him! Horror!
Gros. They love me! Horror! Horror! Horror!

ENSEMBLE.—TUTTI.

GIRLS.

Oh, list while we a love confess
That words imperfectly express,
Those shell-like ears, ah, do not close
To blighted love's distracting woes!
Nor be distressed, nor scandalized
If what we do is ill-advised,
Or we shall seek within the tomb
Relief from our appalling doom!

GROSVENOR.

Again my cursed comeliness
Spreads hopeless anguish and distress,
Thine ears, O Fortune, did not close
To my intolerable woes.
Let me be hideous, undersized,
Contemned, degraded, loathed, despised.
Or bid me seek within the tomb
Relief from my detested doom!

PATIENCE.

List, Reginald, while I confess
A love that's all unselfishness,
That it's unselfish, goodness knows,
You won't dispute it, I suppose.
For you are hideous—undersized,
And everything that I've despised,
And I shall love you, I presume,
Until I sink into the tomb!

BUN.

My jealousy I can't express,
Their love they openly confess,
His shell-like ear he does not close
To their recital of their woes—
I'm more than angry and surprised,
I'm pained, and shocked, and scandalized,
But he shall meet a hideous doom
Prepared for him by—I know whom!

ACT II.

SCENE.—*A glade. In the centre a small sheet of water.* JANE *is discovered leaning on a violoncello, upon which she presently accompanies herself.*

Jane. The fickle crew have deserted Reginald and sworn allegiance to his rival, and all, forsooth, because he has glanced with passing favour on a puling milkmaid! Fools! Of that fancy he will soon weary—and then I, who alone am faithful to him, shall reap my reward. But do not dally too long, Reginald, for my charms are ripe, Reginald, and already they are decaying. Better secure me ere I have gone too far?

RECITATIVE.—JANE.

Sad is that woman's lot who, year by year,
Sees, one by one, her beauties disappear,
When Time, grown weary of her heart-drawn sighs,
Impatiently begins to "dim her eyes!"
Compelled, at last, in life's uncertain gloamings,
To wreathe her wrinkled brow with well-saved "combings,"
Reduced, with rouge, lipsalve and pearly grey,
To "make up" for lost time, as best she may!

SONG.—JANE.

Silvered is the raven hair—
  Spreading is the parting straight,
Mottled the complexion fair,
  Halting is the youthful gait.
Hollow is the laughter free,
  Spectacled the limped eye,
Little will be left of me,
  In the coming by-and-by!

Fading is the taper waist—
  Shapeless grows the shapely limb,
And although securely laced,
  Spreading is the figure trim!
Stouter than I used to be,
  Still more corpulent grow I—
There will be too much of me
  In the coming by-and-by! [*Exit* JANE.

Enter GROSVENOR, *followed by* Maidens, *two and two, each playing on an archaic instrument, as in Act I. He is reading abstractedly, as* BUNTHORNE *did in Act I., and pays no attention to them.*

CHORUS OF MAIDENS.

Turn, oh, turn, in this direction,
Shed, oh, shed a gentle smile,
With a glance of sad perfection
Our poor fainting hearts beguile!
On such eyes as maidens cherish
Let thy fond adorers gaze,
Or incontinently perish,
In their all consuming rays!

[*He sits—they group around him.*

Gros. (*aside*). The old old tale. How rapturously these maidens love me, and how hopelessly! Oh, Patience, Patience, with the love of thee in my heart, what have I for these poor mad maidens but an unvalued pity? Alas, they will die of hopeless love for me, as I shall die of hopeless love for thee!

Ang. Sir, will it please you read to us? (*Kneels.*)

Gros. (*sighing*). Yes, child, if you will. What shall I read?

Ang. One of your own poems.

Gros. One of my own poems? Better not, my child. *They* will not cure thee of thy love.

Ella. Mr. Bunthorne used to read us a poem of his own every day.

Saph. And, to do him justice, he read them extremely well.

Gros. Oh, did he so? Well, who am I that I should take upon myself to withhold my gifts from you? What am I but a trustee? Here is a decalet—a pure and simple thing, a very daisy—a babe might understand it. To appreciate it it is not necessary to think of anything at all.

Ang. Let us think of nothing at all!

GROSVENOR *recites.*

Gentle Jane was as good as gold,
She always did as she was told.
She never spoke when her mouth was full,
Or caught blue-bottles their legs to pull;
Or spilt plum jam on her nice new frock,
Or put white mice in the eight-day clock,
Or vivisected her last new doll,
Or fostered a passion for alcohol.
And when she grew up she was given in marriage
To a first-class earl who keeps his carriage!

Gros. I believe I am right in saying that there is not one word in that decalet which is calculated to bring the blush of shame to the cheek of modesty.

Ang. Not one; it is purity itself.

Gros. Here's another.

Teasing Tom was a very bad boy;
A great big squirt was his favourite toy;
He put live shrimps in his father's boots,
And sewed up the sleeves of his Sunday suits;
He punched his poor little sisters' heads,
And cayenne-peppered their four-post beds;
He plastered their hair with cobbler's wax,
And dropped hot halfpennies down their backs.
The consequence was he was lost totally,
And married a girl in the *corps de bally!*

Ang. Marked you how grandly—how relentlessly—the damning catalogue of crime strode on, till Retribution, like a poisëd hawk, came swooping down upon the Wrong-Doer. Oh, it was terrible!

Ella. Oh, sir, you are indeed a true poet, for you touch our hearts, and they go out to you!

Gros. (*aside*). This is simply cloying. (*Aloud.*) Ladies, I am sorry to distress you, but you have been following me about ever since Monday, and this is Saturday. I should like the usual half-holiday, and if you will kindly allow me to close early to-day, I shall take it as a personal favour.

Saph. Oh, sir, do not send us from you!

Gros. Poor, poor girls! It is best to speak plainly. I know that I am loved by you, but I never can love you in return, for my heart is fixed elsewhere! Remember the fable of the Magnet and the Churn!

Ang. (*wildly*). But we don't know the fable of the Magnet and the Churn!

Gros. Don't you? Then I will sing it to you.

SONG.—GROSVENOR.

A magnet hung in a hardware shop,
And all around was a loving crop
Of scissors and needles, nails and knives,
Offering love for all their lives;
But for iron the magnet felt no whim,
Though he charmed iron, it charmed not him,
From needles and nails and knives he'd turn,
For he'd set his love on a Silver Churn!

All. A Silver Churn!

Gros. A Silver Churn!
His most æsthetic,
Very magnetic
Fancy took this turn—
"If I can wheedle
A knife or needle,
Why not a Silver Churn?"

Chor. His most æsthetic, etc.

Gros. And Iron and Steel expressed surprise,
The needles opened their well-drilled eyes,
The pen-knives felt "shut up," no doubt,
The scissors declared themselves "cut out,
The kettles they boiled with rage, 'tis said,
While every nail went off its head,
And hither and thither began to roam,
Till a hammer came up—and drove them home.

All. It drove them home?

Gros. It drove them home;
While this magnetic
Peripatetic
Lover he lived to learn,
By no endeavour,
Can magnet ever
Attract a Silver Churn!

All. While this magnetic, etc.

[*They go off in low spirits, gazing back at him from time to time.*

Gros. At last they are gone! What *is* this mysterious fascination that I seem to exercise over all I come across. A curse on my fatal beauty, for I am sick of conquests!

PATIENCE *appears.*

Pa. Archibald!

Gros. (*turns and sees her*). Patience!

Pa. I have escaped with difficulty from my Reginald. I wanted to see you so much that I might ask you if you still love me as fondly as ever?

Gros. Love you? If the devotion of a lifetime—— (*Seizes her hand.*)

Pa. (*indignantly*). Hold! Unhand me, or I scream. (*He releases her.*) If you are a gentleman, pray remember that I am another's! (*Very tenderly.*) But you *do* love me, don't you?

Gros. Madly, hopelessly, despairingly!

Pa. That's right! I can never be yours; but that's right!

Gros. And you love this Bunthorne?

Pa. With a heart-whole ecstasy that withers, and scorches, and burns, and stings! (*Sadly.*) It is my duty.

Gros. Admirable girl! But you are not happy with him?

Pa. Happy? I am miserable beyond description!

Gros. That's right! I never can be yours; but that's right!

Pa. But go now—I see dear Reginald approaching. Fare-

well, dear Archibald, I cannot tell you how happy it has made me to know that you still love me.

Gros. Ah, if I only dared—— (*Advances towards her.*)

Pa. Sir! This language to one who is promised to another! (*Tenderly.*) Oh, Archibald, think of me sometimes, for my heart is breaking! He is so unkind to me, and you would be so loving!

Gros. Loving! (*Advances towards her.*)

Pa. Advance one step, and as I am a good and pure woman, I scream! (*Tenderly.*) Farewell, Archibald! (*Sternly.*) Stop there! (*Tenderly.*) Think of me sometimes! (*Angrily.*) Advance at your peril! Once more, adieu!

[GROSVENOR *sighs, gazes sorrowfully at her, sighs deeply, and exit. She bursts into tears.*

Enter BUNTHORNE, *followed by* JANE. *He is moody and preoccupied.*

JANE *sings.*

In a melancholy train,
One and one I walk all day;
Pity those who love in vain—
None so sorrowful as they,
Who can only sigh and say,
Woe is me, alack a-day!

Bun. (*seeing* PATIENCE). Crying, eh? What are you crying about?

Pa. I've only been thinking how dearly I love you!

Bun. Love me! Bah!

Jane. Love him! Bah!

Bun. (*to* JANE). Don't you interfere.

Jane. He always crushes me!

Pa. (*going to him*). What is the matter, dear Reginald? If you have any sorrow, tell it to me, that I may share it with you. (*Sighing.*) It is my duty!

Bun. (*snappishly*). Whom were you talking with, just now?

Pa. With dear Archibald.

Bun. (*furiously*). With dear Archibald! Upon my honour, this is too much!

Jane. A great deal too much!

Bun. (*angrily to* JANE). Do be quiet!

Jane. Crushed again!

Pa. I think he is the noblest, purest, and most perfect being I have ever met. But I don't love him. It is true that he is devotedly atttached to me, but indeed I don't love *him.*

Whenever he grows affectionate, I scream. It is my duty! (*Sighing*).

Bun. I dare say!

Jane. So do I. *I* dare say!

Pa. Why, how could I love him and love you too? You can't love two people at once!

Bun. I don't believe you know what love is!

Pa. (*sighing*). Yes, I do! There was a happy time when I didn't, but a bitter experience has taught me!

BALLAD.—PATIENCE.

Love is a plaintive song,
Sung by a suffering maid,
Telling a tale of wrong,
Telling of hope betrayed.
Tuned to each changing note,
Sorry when *he* is sad.
Blind to his every mote,
Merry when he is glad!
Love that no wrong can cure,
Love that is always new,
That is the love that's pure,
That is the love that's true!

Rendering good for ill,
Smiling at every frown,
Yielding your own self-will,
Laughing your tear-drops down,
Never a selfish whim,
Trouble, or pain to stir;
Everything for him,
Nothing at all for her!
Love that will aye endure,
Though the rewards be few,
That is the love that's pure,
That is the love that's true!

[*At the end of ballad, exit* PATIENCE, *weeping.*

Bun. Everything has gone wrong with me since that smug-faced idiot came here. Before that I was admired; I may say, loved.

Jane. Too mild. Adored!

Bun. Do let a poet soliloquize! The damozels used to follow me wherever I went; now they all follow him!

Jane. Not all! *I* am still faithful to you.

Bun. Yes, and a pretty damozel *you* are!

Jane. No, not pretty. Massive. Cheer up! I will never leave you, I swear it!

Bun. Oh, thank you! I know what it is; it's his con-

founded mildness. They find me too highly spiced, if you please! And no doubt I *am* highly spiced.

Jane. Not for my taste!

Bun. (*savagely*). No; but I am for theirs. But I can be as mild as he. If they want insipidity, they shall have it. I'll meet this fellow on his own ground and beat him on it.

Jane. You shall. And I will help you.

Bun. You will? Jane, there's a good deal of good in you, after all!

DUET.—BUNTHORNE AND JANE.

Jane. So go to him and say to him, with compliment ironical—
Bun. Sing "Hey to you—
Good day to you"—
And that's what I shall say!
Jane. "Your style is much too sanctified—your cut is too canonical—"
Bun. Sing "Bah to you—
Ha! ha! to you"—
And that's what I shall say!
Jane. "I was the beau ideal of the morbid young æsthetical—
To doubt my inspiration was regarded as heretical—
Until you cut me out with your placidity emetical."
Bun. Sing "Booh to you—
Pooh, pooh, to you"—
And that's what I shall say!
Both. Sing "Hey to you, good day to you"—
Sing "Bah to you, ha! ha! to you"
Sing "Booh to you, pooh, pooh"—
And that's what { you / I } shall say!
Bun. I'll tell him that unless he will consent to be more jocular—
Jane. Say "Booh to you—
Pooh, pooh, to you"
And that's what you should say!
Bun. To cut his curly hair, and stick an eye-glass in his ocular—
Jane. Sing "Bah to you—
Ha! ha! to you"—
And that's what you should say!
Bun. To stuff his conversation full of quibble and of quiddity,
To dine on chops and roly-poly pudding with avidity—
He'd better clear away with all convenient rapidity.
Jane. Sing "Hey to you—
Good day to you"—
And that's what you should say!
Both. Sing "Booh to you—pooh, pooh, to you,"
Sing "Bah to you—ha! ha! to you,"
Sing "Hey to you—good day to you—"
And that's what { I / you } shall say!

[*Exeunt* JANE *and* BUNTHORNE *together*

[*Enter* DUKE, COLONEL, *and* MAJOR. *They have abandoned their uniforms, and are dressed and made up in imitation of Æsthetics. They have long hair, and other outward signs of attachment to the brotherhood. As they sing they walk in stiff, constrained, and angular attitudes—a grotesque exaggeration of the attitudes adopted by Bunthorne and the young* Ladies *in Act I.*

TRIO.

DUKE, COLONEL, AND MAJOR.

It's clear that mediæval art alone retains its zest,
To charm and please its devotees we've done our little best.
We're not quite sure if all we do has the Early English ring;
But, as far as we can judge, it's something like this sort of thing:
You hold yourself like this (*attitude*),
You hold yourself like that (*attitude*),
By hook and crook you try to look both angular and flat (*attitude*).
We venture to expect
That what we recollect,
Though but a part of true High Art, will have its due effect.

If this is not exactly right, we hope you won't upbraid,
You can't get high Æsthetic tastes like trousers, ready made.
True views on Mediævalism, Time alone will bring,
But, as far as we can judge, it's something like this sort of thing:
You hold yourself like this (*attitude*),
You hold yourself like that (*attitude*),
By hook and crook you try to look both angular and flat (*attitude*).
To cultivate the trim
Rigidity of limb,
You ought to get a Marionette, and form your style on him (*attitude*).

Col. (*attitude*). Yes, it's quite clear that our only chance of making a lasting impression on these young ladies is to become as æsthetic as they are.

Maj. (*attitude*). No doubt. The only question is how far we've succeeded in doing so. I don't know why, but I've an idea that this is not quite right.

Duke (*attitude*). *I* don't like it. I never did. I don't see what it means. I do it, but I don't like it.

Col. My good friend, the question is not whether we like it, but whether they do. They understand these things—we don't. Now, I shouldn't be surprised if this is effective enough—at a distance.

Maj. I can't help thinking we're a little stiff at it. It would be extremely awkward if we were to be "struck" so!

Col. I don't think we shall be struck so. Perhaps we're a little awkward at first—but everything must have a beginning. Oh, here they come! 'Tention!

They strike fresh attitudes, as ANG. *and* SAPHIR *enter.*

Ang. (*seeing them*). Oh, Saphir—see—see! The immortal fire has descended on them, and they are of the Inner Brotherhood—perceptively intense and consummately utter! (*The* Officers *have some difficulty in maintaining their constrained attitudes.*)

Saph. (*in admiration*). How Botticellian! How Fra Angelican! Oh, Art! I thank thee for this boon!

Col. (*apologetically*). I'm afraid we're not quite right.

Ang. Not supremely, perhaps, but, oh, so all-but! (*To* SAPHIR.) Oh, Saphir, are they not quite too all-but?

Saph. They are indeed jolly utter.

Maj. (*in agony*). What do the Inner Brotherhood usually recommend for cramp?

Col. Ladies, we will not deceive you. We are doing this at some personal inconvenience with a view of expressing the extremity of our devotion to you. We trust that it is not without its effect.

Ang. We will not deny that we are much moved by this proof of your attachment.

Saph. Yes, your conversion to the principles of Æsthetic Art in its highest development has touched us deeply.

Ang. And if Mr. Grosvenor should remain obdurate—

Saph. Which we have every reason to believe he will—

Maj. (*aside, in agony*). I wish they'd make haste.

Ang. We are not prepared to say that our yearning hearts will not go out to you.

Col. (*as giving a word of command*). By sections of threes—Rapture! (*All strike a fresh attitude, expressive of æsthetic rapture.*)

Saph. Oh, it's extremely good—for beginners it's admirable.

Maj. The only question is, who will take who?

Saph. Oh, the Duke choose first, as a matter of course.

Duke. Oh, I couldn't think of it—you are really too good!

Col. Nothing of the kind. You are a great matrimonial fish, and it's only fair that each of these ladies should have a chance of hooking you.

Duke. It's perfectly simple. Observe, suppose you choose Angela, I take Saphir, Major takes nobody. Suppose you choose Saphir, Major takes Angela, I take nobody. Suppose you choose neither, I take Angela, Major takes Saphir. Clear as day!

QUINTETTE.

DUKE, COLONEL, MAJOR, ANGELA, AND SAPHIR.

DUKE (*taking* SAPHIR).
If Saphir I choose to marry,
I shall be fixed up for life;
Then the Colonel need not tarry,
Angela can be his wife.

[*Handing* ANGELA *to* COLONEL.

[DUKE *dances with* SAPHIR, COLONEL *with* ANGELA, MAJOR *dances alone.*

MAJOR (*dancing alone*).
In that case unprecedented,
Single I shall live and die—
I shall have to be contented
With their heartfelt sympathy!

ALL (*dancing as before*).
He will have to be contented
With our heartfelt sympathy!

DUKE (*taking* ANGELA).
If on Angy I determine,
At my wedding she'll appear,
Decked in diamond and ermine,
Major then can take Saphir!

[*Handing* SAPHIR *to* MAJOR.

[DUKE *dances with* ANGELA, MAJOR *with* SAPHIR, COLONEL *dances alone.*

COLONEL (*dancing*).
In that case unprecedented,
Single I shall live and die,
I shall have to be contented
With their heartfelt sympathy!

ALL (*dancing as before*).
He will have to be contented
With our heartfelt sympathy!

DUKE (*taking both* ANGELA *and* SAPHIR).
After some debate internal,
If on neither I decide,
Saphir then can take the Colonel,

[*Handing* SAPHIR *to* COLONEL.

Angy be the Major's bride!

[*Handing* ANGELA *to* MAJOR.

[COLONEL *dances with* SAPHIR, MAJOR *with* ANGELA, DUKE *dances alone.*

DUKE (*dancing*).

In that case unprecedented,
Single I must live and die,
I shall have to be contented
With their heartfelt sympathy!

ALL (*dancing as before*).

He will have to live contented
With our heartfelt sympathy!

[*At the end*, DUKE, COLONEL, *and* MAJOR, *and two* Girls *dance off arm in arm.*

Enter GROSVENOR.

Gros. It is very pleasant to be alone. It is pleasant to be able to gaze at leisure upon those features which all others may gaze upon at their good will! (*Looking at his reflection in hand-mirror.*) Ah! I am a very Narcissus!

Enter BUNTHORNE, *moodily.*

Bun. It's no use, I can't live without admiration! Since Grosvenor came here, insipidity has been at a premium. Ah, he is there!

Gros. Ah, Bunthorne, come here—look! Very graceful, isn't it?

Bun. (*taking hand-mirror*). Yes, it is graceful.

Gros. (*re-taking hand-mirror*). Oh! good gracious not that—this——

Bun. You don't mean that. Bah! I am in no mood for trifling.

Gros. And what is amiss?

Bun. Ever since you came here, you have entirely monopolized the attentions of the young ladies. I don't like it, sir!

Gros. My dear sir, how can I help it? They are the plague of my life. My dear Mr. Bunthorne, with your personal disadvantages, you can have no idea of the inconvenience of being madly loved, at first sight, by every woman you meet.

Bun. Sir, until you came here I was adored!

Gros. Exactly—until I came here. That's my grievance. I cut everybody out! I assure you, if you could only suggest some means whereby, consistently with my duty to society, I could escape these inconvenient attentions, you would earn my everlasting gratitude.

Bun. I will do so at once. However popular it may be

with the world at large, your personal appearance is highly objectionable to *me*.

Gros. It is? (*Shaking his hand.*) Oh, thank you, thank you! How can I express my gratitude?

Bun. By making a complete change at once. Your conversation must henceforth be perfectly matter-of-fact. You must cut your hair, and have a back parting. In appearance and costume you must be absolutely commonplace.

Gros. (*decidedly*). No. Pardon me, that's impossible.

Bun. Take care. When I am thwarted I am very terrible.

Gros. I can't help that. I am a man with a mission. And that mission must be fulfilled.

Bun. I don't think you quite appreciate the consequences of thwarting me.

Gros. I don't care what they are.

Bun. Suppose—I won't go so far as to say that I will do it—but suppose for one moment, I were to curse you? (GROSVENOR *quails.*) Ah! Very well. Take care.

Gros. But surely you would never do that? (*In great alarm.*)

Bun. I don't know. It would be an extreme measure, no doubt. Still——

Gros. (*wildly*). But you would not do it—I am sure you would not. (*Throwing himself at* BUNTHORNE'S *knees, and clinging to him.*) Oh, reflect, reflect! You had a mother once.

Bun. Never!

Gros. Then you had an aunt! (BUNTHORNE *affected.*) Ah! I see you had! By the memory of that aunt, I implore you to pause ere you resort to this last fearful expedient. Oh, Mr. Bunthorne, reflect, reflect! (*Weeping.*)

Bun. (*aside, after a struggle with himself*). I must not allow myself to be unmanned! (*Aloud.*) It is useless. Consent at once, or may a nephew's curse——

Gros. Hold. Are you absolutely resolved?

Bun. Absolutely.

Gros. Will nothing shake you?

Bun. Nothing. I am adamant.

Gros. Very good. (*Rising.*) Then I yield.

Bun. Ha! You swear it?

Gros. I do. Cheerfully. I have long wished for a reasonable pretext for such a change as you suggest. It has come at last. I do it on compulsion!

Bun. Victory! I triumph!

DUET.—BUNTHORNE AND GROSVENOR.

Bun. When I go out of door,
Of damozels a score
(All sighing and burning,
And clinging and yearning)
Will follow me as before.
I shall, with cultured taste,
Distinguish gems from paste,
And "High diddle diddle"
Will rank as an idyll,
If I pronounce it chaste!

A most intense young man,
A soulful-eyed young man,
An ultra poetical, super-æsthetical,
Out-of-the-way young man.

Both. A most intense young man, etc.

Gros. Conceive me, if you can,
An everyday young man;
A commonplace type,
With a stick and a pipe,
And a half-bred black-and-tan.
Who thinks suburban "hops,"
More fun than "Monday pops."
Who's fond of his dinner,
And doesn't get thinner
On bottled beer and chops.

A commonplace young man—
A matter-of-fact young man—
A steady and stolid-y, jolly Bank-holiday
Everyday young man!

Bun. A Japanese young man—
A blue-and-white young man—
Francesca di Rimini, miminy, piminy,
Je-ne-sais-quoi young man.

Gros. A Chancery Lane young man—
A Somerset House young man—
A very delectable, highly respectable,
Threepenny-bus young man!

Bun. A pallid and thin young man—
A haggard and lank young man—
A greenery-yallery, Grosvenor Gallery,
Foot-in-the-grave young man!

Gros. A Sewell and Cross young man—
A Howell and James young man—
A pushing young particle—"What's the next article"—
Waterloo House young man!

ENSEMBLE.

BUN. GROS.

Conceive me, if you can, Conceive me, if you can,
A crotchety, cracked young man, A matter-of-fact young man,
An ultra-poetical, super-æsthetical, An alphabetical, arithmetical,
Out-of-the-way young man! Everyday young man!

[*At the end,* GROSVENOR *dances off.* BUNTHORNE *remains.*

Bun. It is all right! I have committed my last act of ill-nature, and henceforth I'm a reformed character.

[*Dances about stage, humming refrain of last air.*

Enter PATIENCE. *She gazes in astonishment at him.*

Pa. Reginald! Dancing! And—what in the world is the matter with you?

Bun. Patience, I'm a changed man. Hitherto, I've been gloomy, moody, fitful—uncertain in temper, and selfish in disposition—

Pa. You have indeed! (*Sighing.*)

Bun. All that is changed. I have reformed. I have modelled myself upon Mr. Grosvenor. Henceforth I am mildly cheerful. My conversation will blend amusement with instruction. I shall still be æsthetic; but my æstheticism will be of the most pastoral kind.

Pa. Oh, Reginald! Is all this true?

Bun. Quite true. Observe how amiable I am. (*Assuming a fixed smile.*)

Pa. But, Reginald, how long will this last?

Bun. With occasional intervals for rest and refreshment, as long as I do.

Pa. Oh, Reginald, I'm so happy! (*In his arms.*) Oh, dear, dear Reginald, I cannot express the joy I feel at this change. It will no longer be a duty to love you, but a pleasure—a rapture, an ecstasy!

Bun. My darling!

Pa. But—oh, horror! (*Recoiling from him.*)

Bun. What's the matter?

Pa. Is it quite certain that you have absolutely reformed—that you are henceforth a perfect being—utterly free from defect of any kind?

Bun. It is quite certain. I have sworn it!

Pa. Then I never can be yours!

Bun. Why not?

Pa. Love, to be pure, must be absolutely unselfish, and there can be nothing unselfish in loving so perfect a being as you have now become!

Bun. But, stop a bit, I don't want to reform—I'll relapse—I'll be as I was—

Pa. No; love should purify—it should never debase.

Bun. But, I assure you, I—interrupted!

Enter GROSVENOR, *followed by all the young* Ladies, *who are followed by chorus of* Dragoons. *He has had his hair cut, and is dressed in an ordinary suit of dittos and a pot hat. They all dance cheerfully round the stage in marked contrast to their former languor.*

CHORUS—GROSVENOR AND LADIES.

GROS.	LADIES.
I'm a Waterloo House young man, A Sewell and Cross young man, A steady and stolid-y, jolly Bank-holiday, Everyday young man.	We're Swears and Wells young girls, We're Madame Louise young girls, We're prettily pattering, cheerily chattering, Everyday young girls.

Gros. I'm a Waterloo House young man!
Girls. We're Swears and Wells young girls!
Gros. I'm a Sewell and Cross young man!
Girls. We're Madam Louise young girls!
Gros. } I'm a steady and stolid-y, jolly Bank-holiday,
Everyday young man!
Ladies. } We're prettily pattering, cheerily chattering,
Everyday young girls!

Bun. Angela—Ella—Saphir—what—what does this mean?

Ang. It means that Archibald the All-right cannot be wrong; and if the All-right chooses to discard æstheticism, it proves that æstheticism ought to be discarded.

Pa. Oh, Archibald! Archibald! I'm shocked—surprised—horrified!

Gros. I can't help it. I'm not a free agent. I do it on compulsion.

Pa. This is terrible. Go! I shall never set eyes on you again. But—oh, joy!

Gros. What is the matter?

Pa. Is it quite, quite certain that you will always be a commonplace young man?

Gros. Always—I've sworn it.

Pa. Why, then, there's nothing to prevent my loving you with all the fervour at my command!

Gros. Why, that's true.

Pa. My Archibald!

Gros. My Patience! (*They embrace.*)

Bun. Crushed again!

Enter JANE.

Jane (*who is still æsthetic*). Cheer up! I am still here. I have never left you, and I never will!

Bun. Thank you, Jane. After all, there is no denying it, you're a fine figure of a woman!

Jane. My Reginald!

Bun. My Jane!

Flourish. *Enter* COLONEL, DUKE, *and* MAJOR.

Col. Ladies, the Duke has at length determined to select a bride! (*General excitement.*)

Duke. I have a great gift to bestow. Approach, such of you as are truly lovely. (*All come forward, bashfully, except* JANE *and* PATIENCE.) In personal beauty you have all that is necessary to make a woman happy. In common fairness, I think I ought to choose the only one among you who has the misfortune to be distinctly plain. (Girls *retire disappointed.*) JANE!

Jane (*leaving* BUNTHORNE'S *arms*). Duke! (JANE *and* DUKE *embrace.* BUNTHORNE *is utterly disgusted.*)

Bun. Crushed again!

FINALE.

Duke. After much debate internal
I on Lady Jane decide,
Saphir now may take the Colonel,
Angy be the Major's bride!

[SAPHIR *pairs off with* COLONEL, ANGELA *with the* MAJOR, ELLA *with* Solicitor.

Bun. In that case unprecedented,
Single I must live and die,
I shall have to be contented
With a tulip or lily!

[*Takes a lily from button-hole, and gazes affectionately at it.*

All. He will have to be contented
With a tulip or lily!

All. Greatly pleased with one another,
To get married we decide,
Each of us will wed the other,
Nobody be Bunthorne's Bride!

DANCE.

CURTAIN.

PRINCESS IDA;

OR,

CASTLE ADAMANT.

A RESPECTFUL OPERATIC PER-VERSION OF TENNYSON'S "PRINCESS,"

IN THREE ACTS.

Produced at the Savoy Theatre, Saturday, January 5th, 1884, under the management of MR. R. D'OYLY CARTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING HILDEBRAND		MR. RUTLAND BARRINGTON.
HILARION, *his Son*		MR. H. BRACY.
CYRIL, FLORIAN	*Hilarion's Friends* ...	MR. DURWARD LELY. / MR. CHAS. RYLEY.
KING GAMA		MR. GEORGE GROSSMITH.
ARAC, GURON, SCYNTHIUS	*his Sons*	MR. RICHARD TEMPLE. / MR. WARWICK GRAY. / MR. LUGG.
PRINCESS IDA, *Gama's Daughter* ...		MISS LEONORA BRAHAM.
LADY BLANCHE, *Professor of Abstract Science*		MISS BRANDRAM.
LADY PSYCHE, *Professor of Humanities*		MISS KATE CHARD.
MELISSA, *Lady Blanche's Daughter* ...		MISS JESSIE BOND.
SACHARISSA, CHLOE, ADA	*Girl Graduates* ...	MISS SYBIL GREY. / MISS HEATHCOTE. / MISS LILIAN CARR.

Soldiers, Courtiers, Girl Graduates, Daughters of the Plough, etc.

ACT I.
PAVILION IN KING HILDEBRAND'S PALACE.

ACT II.
GARDENS OF CASTLE ADAMANT.

ACT III.
COURTYARD OF CASTLE ADAMANT.

PRINCESS IDA;

OR,

CASTLE ADAMANT.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Pavilion attached to* KING HILDEBRAND'S *Palace.* Soldiers *and* Courtiers *discovered looking out through opera-glasses, telescopes, etc.,* FLORIAN *leading.*

CHORUS.

Search throughout the panorama
For a sign of royal Gama,
Who to-day should cross the water
With his fascinating daughter—
Ida is her name.

Some misfortune evidently
Has detained them—consequently
Search throughout the panorama
For the daughter of King Gama,
Prince Hilarion's flame!

SOLO.

Flor. Will Prince Hilarion's hopes be sadly blighted?
All. Who can tell?
Flor. Will Ida break the vows that she has plighted?
All. Who can tell?
Flor. Will she back out, and say she did not mean them?
All. Who can tell?
Flor. If so, there'll be the deuce to pay between them!
All. No, no—we'll not despair,
For Gama would not dare
To make a deadly foe
Of Hildebrand, and so,
Search throughout, etc.

Enter KING HILDEBRAND, *with* CYRIL.

Hild. See you no sign of Gama?
Flor. None, my liege!
Hild. It's very odd indeed. If Gama fail
To put in an appearance at our Court
Before the sun has set in yonder west.
And fail to bring the Princess Ida here,
To whom our son Hilarion was betrothed
At the extremely early age of one,
There's war between King Gama and ourselves!
(*Aside to* CYRIL.) Oh, Cyril, how I dread this interview,
It's twenty years since he and I have met.
He was a twisted monster—all awry—
As though dame Nature, angry with her work,
Had crumpled it in fitful petulance!
Cyr. But, sir, a twisted and ungainly trunk
Often bears goodly fruit. Perhaps he was
A kind, well-spoken gentlemen?
Hild. Oh, no!
For, adder-like, his sting lay in his tongue.
(His "sting" is present, though his "stung" is past.)
Flor. (*looking through glass*). But stay, my liege; o'er yonder mountain's brow
Comes a small body, bearing Gama's arms;
And now, I look more closely at it, sir,
I see attached to it King Gama's legs;
From which I gather this corollary
That that small body must be Gama's own!
Hild. Ha! Is the Princess with him?
Flor. Well, my liege,
Unless her highness is full six feet high,
And wears moustachios too—and smokes cigars—
And rides *en cavalier* in coat of steel—
I do not think she is.
Hild. One never knows.
She's a strange girl, I've heard, and does odd things!
Come, bustle there!
For Gama place the richest robes we own—
For Gama place the coarsest prison dress—
For Gama let our best spare bed be aired—
For Gama let our deepest dungeon yawn—
For Gama lay the costliest banquet out—
For Gama place cold water and dry bread!
For as King Gama brings the Princess here,

Or brings her not, so shall King Gama have
Much more than everything—much less than nothing!

SONG AND CHORUS.

Hild. Now hearken to my strict command
On every hand, on every hand—

CHORUS.

To your command,
On every hand,
We dutifully bow!

Hild. If Gama bring the Princess here
Give him good cheer, give him good cheer.

CHORUS.

If she come here
We'll give him a cheer,
And we will show you how.
Hip, hip, hurrah! hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hurrah! hip, hip, hurrah!
We'll shout and sing
Long live the king,
And his daughter, too, I trow!
Then shout ha! ha! hip, hip, hurrah!
For the fair Princess and her good papa,
Hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hurrah! hurrah!

Hild. But if he fail to keep his troth,
Upon our oath, we'll trounce them both!

CHORUS.

He'll trounce them both,
Upon his oath.
As sure as quarter day!

Hild. We'll shut him up in a dungeon cell,
And toll his knell on a funeral bell.

CHORUS.

From dungeon cell,
His funeral knell,
Shall strike him with dismay!
And we'll shout ha! ha! hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hurrah! hip, hip, hurrah!
As up we string,
The faithless King,
In the old familiar way!

We'll shout ha! ha! hip, hip, hurrah!
As we make an end of her false papa.
Hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hurrah! hurrah! [*Exeunt all.*

Enter HILARION.

RECITATIVE.—HILARION.

To-day we meet—my baby bride and I—
But, ah, my hopes are balanced by my fears!
What transmutations have been conjured by
The silent alchemy of twenty years!

BALLAD.—HILARION.

Ida was a twelvemonth old,
Twenty years ago!
I was twice her age, I'm told,
Twenty years ago!
Husband twice as old as wife
Argues ill for married life
Baleful prophecies were rife
Twenty years ago!

Still, I was a tiny prince
Twenty years ago.
She has gained upon me, since
Twenty years ago.
Though she twenty-one, it's true,
I am barely twenty-two—
False and foolish prophets you,
Twenty years ago!

Enter HILDEBRAND.

Hil. Well, father, is there news for me at last?
Hild. King Gama is in sight, but much I fear
With no Princess!
Hil. Alas, my liege, I've heard
That Princess Ida has forsworn the world,
And, with a band of women, shut herself
Within a lonely country house, and there
Devotes herself to stern philosophies!
Hild. Then I should say the loss of such a wife
Is one to which a reasonable man
Would easily be reconciled.
Hil. Oh no!
Or I am not a reasonable man.
She *is* my wife—has been for twenty years!
(*Looking through glass.*) I think I see her now.

Hild. Ha! let me look!

Hil. In my mind's eye, I mean—a blushing bride,
All bib and tucker, frill and furbelow!
How exquisite she looked, as she was borne,
Recumbent, in her foster-mother's arms;
How the bride wept—nor would be comforted
Until the hireling mother-for-the-nonce,
Administered refreshment in the vestry.
And I remember feeling much annoyed
That she should weep at marrying with me.
But then I thought, "These brides are all alike.
You cry at marrying me? How much more cause
You'd have to cry if it were broken off!"
These were my thoughts; I kept them to myself,
For at that age I had not learnt to speak.

Enter Courtiers, *with* CYRIL *and* FLORIAN.

Chorus. From the distant panorama
Come the sons of royal Gama.
Who, to-day, should cross the water
With his fascinating daughter—
Ida is her name!

Enter ARAC, GURON *and* SCYNTHIUS.

SONG.—ARAC.

We are warriors three,
Sons of Gama, Rex,
Like most sons are we,
Masculine in sex.

All Three. Yes, yes,
Masculine in sex.

Arac. Politics we bar,
They are not our bent;
On the whole we are
Not intelligent.

All Three. No, no,
Not intelligent.

Arac. But with doughty heart,
And with trusty blade
We can play our part—
Fighting is our trade.

All Three. Yes, yes,
Fighting is our trade.

All Three. Bold, and fierce, and strong, ha! ha!
For a war we burn,

With its right or wrong, ha! ha!
We have no concern.
Order comes to fight, ha! ha!
Order is obeyed,

We are men of might, ha! ha!
Fighting is our trade.
Yes, yes,
Fighting is our trade, ha! ha!
Fighting is our trade.

Chorus. They are men of might, ha! ha!
Order comes to fight, ha! ha!
Order is obeyed, ha! ha!
Fighting is their trade!

Enter KING GAMA.

SONG.—GAMA.

If you give me your attention, I will tell you what I am!
I'm a genuine philanthropist—all other kinds are sham.
Each little fault of temper and each social defect
In my erring fellow-creatures, I endeavour to correct.
To all their little weaknesses I open people's eyes
And little plans to snub the self-sufficient I devise;
I love my fellow-creatures—I do all the good I can—
Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

To compliments inflated I've a withering reply,
And vanity I always do my best to mortify;
A charitable action I can skilfully dissect;
And interested motives I'm delighted to detect;
I know everybody's income and what everybody earns;
And I carefully compare it with the income-tax returns;
But to benefit humanity however much I plan,
Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

I'm sure I'm no ascetic; I'm as pleasant as can be;
You'll always find me ready with a crushing repartee,
I've an irritating chuckle, I've a celebrated sneer,
I've an entertaining snigger, I've a fascinating leer.
To everybody's prejudice I know a thing or two;
I can tell a woman's age in half a minute—and I do.
But although I try to make myself as pleasant as I can,
Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

Gama. So this is Castle Hildebrand? Well, well! Dame Rumour whispered that the place was grand; She told me that your taste was exquisite, Superb, unparalleled!

Hild. (*gratified*). Oh, really, king!

Gama. But she's a liar! Why, how old you've grown!
Is this Hilarion? Why, you've changed too—
You were a singularly handsome child!
(*To Florian.*) Are you a courtier? Come, then, ply your trade,
Tell me some lies. How do you like your king?
Vile rumour says he's all but imbecile.
Now, that's not true?
Flo. My lord, we love our king
His wise remarks are valued by his court
As precious stones.
Gama. And for the selfsame cause,
Like precious stones, his sensible remarks
Derive their value from their scarcity!
Come now, be honest, tell the truth for once!
Tell it of me. Come, come, I'll harm you not.
This leg is crooked—this foot is ill-designed—
This shoulder wears a hump! Come, out with it!
Look, here's my face! Now, am I not the worst
Of Nature's blunders?
Cyril. Nature never errs.
To those who know the workings of your mind,
Your face and figure, sir, suggest a book
Appropriately bound.
Gama (*enraged*). Why, hark ye, sir,
How dare you bandy words with me?
Cyril. No need,
To bandy aught that appertains to you.
Gama (*furiously*). Do you permit this, king?
Hild. We are in doubt
Whether to treat you as an honoured guest,
Or as a traitor knave who plights his word,
And breaks it.
Gama (*quickly*). If the casting vote's with me,
I give it for the former!
Hild. We shall see.
By the terms of our contract, signed and sealed,
You're bound to bring the Princess here to-day;
Why is she not with you?
Gama. Answer me this;
What think you of a wealthy purse-proud man,
Who, when he calls upon a starving friend,
Pulls out his gold and flourishes his notes,
And flashes diamonds in the pauper's eyes?
What name have you for such an one?

Hild. A snob.
Gama. Just so. The girl has beauty, virtue, wit,
Grace, humour, wisdom, charity, and pluck.
Would it be kindly, think you, to parade,
These brilliant qualities before *your* eyes?
Oh no, King Hildebrand, I am no snob!
Hild. (*furiously*). Stop that tongue,
Or you shall lose the monkey head that holds it!
Gama. Bravo! your king deprives me of my head,
That he and I may meet on equal terms!
Hild. Where is she now?
Gama. In Castle Adamant,
One of my many country houses.
She rules a woman's University,
With full a hundred girls, who learn of her.
Cyril. A hundred girls! A hundred ecstasies!
Gama. But no mere girls, my good young gentleman;
With all the college learning that you boast,
The youngest there will prove a match for *you*.
Cyril. With all my heart, if she's the prettiest!
(*To Flo.*) Fancy a hundred matches—all alight!—
That's if I strike them as I hope to do!
Gama. Despair your hope; their hearts are dead to men.
He who desires to gain their favour must
Be qualified to strike their teeming brains,
And not their hearts. They're safety matches, sir,
And they light only on the knowledge box—
So *you've* no chance!
Flo. Are there no males whatever in those walls?
Gama. None, gentlemen, excepting letter mails—
And they are driven (as males often are
In other large communities) by women.
Why, bless my heart, she's so particular
She'll scarcely suffer Dr. Watt's hymns—
And all the animals she owns are "hers"!
The ladies rise at cockcrow every morn—
Cyril. Ah, then they have male poultry?
Gama. Not at all,
(*Confidentially.*) The crowing's done by an accomplished hen!

DUET.—GAMA AND HILDEBRAND.

Gama. Perhaps if you address the lady
Most politely, most politely—
Flatter and impress the lady,
Most politely, most politely—

Humbly beg and humbly sue—
She may deign to look on you,
But your doing you must do
Most politely, most politely!

All. Humbly beg and humbly sue, etc.

Hild. Go you, and inform the lady,
Most politely, most politely,
If she don't, we'll storm the lady,
Most politely, most politely!

(*To Gama*). You'll remain as hostage here;
Should Hilarion disappear,
We will hang you, never fear,
Most politely, most politely!

All. { He'll / I'll / You'll } remain as hostage here, etc.

[GAMA, ARAC, GURON, *and* SCYNTHIUS *are marched off in custody,* HILDEBRAND *following.*

RECITATIVE.—HILARION.

Come, Cyril, Florian, our course is plain,
To-morrow morn fair Ida we'll engage;
But we will use no force her love to gain,
Nature has armed us for the war we wage!

TRIO.—HILARION, CYRIL, AND FLORIAN.

Hil. Expressive glances
Shall be our lances,
And pops of Sillery
Our light artillery.
We'll storm their bowers
With scented showers
Of fairest flowers
That we can buy!

Chor. Oh, dainty triolet!
Oh, fragrant violet!
Oh, gentle heigho-let
(Or little sigh)

On sweet urbanity,
Though mere inanity,
To touch their vanity
We will rely!

Cyr When day is fading,
With serenading
And such frivolity
We'll prove our quality.
A sweet profusion
Of soft allusion
This bold intrusion
Shall justify.

Chor. Oh, dainty triolet, etc.

Flo. We'll charm their senses
With verbal fences,
With ballads amatory
And declamatory.
And little heeding
Their pretty pleading
Our love exceeding
We'll justify!

Chor. Oh, dainty triolet, etc.

Re-enter GAMA, ARAC, GURON, *and* SCYNTHIUS *heavily ironed.*

RECITATIVE.

Gama. Must we, till then, in prison cell be thrust?
Hild. You must!
Gama. This seems unnecessarily severe!
Arac, Guron, and *Scynthius.* Hear, hear!

TRIO.—ARAC, GURON AND SCYNTHIUS.

For a month to dwell
In a dungeon cell;
Growing thin and wizen
In a solitary prison,
Is a poor look out
For a soldier stout,
Who is longing for the rattle
Of a complicated battle—
For the rum-tum-tum
Of the military drum,
And the guns that go boom! boom!

All. Boom! boom! boom! boom!
Rum-tummy-tummy-tum!
Boom! boom!

Hild. When Hilarion's bride
Has at length compiled
With the just conditions
Of our requisitions,
You may go in haste
And indulge your taste
For the fascinating rattle
Of a complicated battle.

For the rum-tum-tum,
Of the military drum,
And the guns that go boom! boom!

All. Boom! boom! etc.

All. But till that time { we'll / you'll } here remain,
And bail { they / we } will not entertain.

Should she { his / our } mandate disobey,
{ Our / Your } lives the penalty will pay!

[GAMA, ARAC, GURON, *and* SCYNTHIUS *are marched off.*

ACT II.

Gardens in Castle Adamant. A river runs across the back of the stage, crossed by a rustic bridge. Castle Adamant in the distance. Girl *graduates discovered seated at the feet of* LADY PSYCHE.

CHORUS.

Towards the empyrean heights
Of every kind of lore,
We've taken several easy flights,
And mean to take some more.
In trying to achieve success
No envy racks our heart,
And all the knowledge we possess
We mutually impart.

SOLO.—MELISSA.

Pray what authors should she read
Who in Classics would succeed?

PSYCHE.

If you'd cross the Helicon,
You should read Anacreon,
Ovid's Metamorphoses,
Likewise Aristophanes,
And the works of Juvenal:
These are worth attention, all;
But, if you will be advised,
You will get them Bowdlerized!

CHORUS.

Yes, we'll do as we're advised,
We will get them Bowdlerized!

SOLO.—SACHARISSA.

Pray you, tell us, if you can,
What's the thing that's known as Man?

PSYCHE.

Man will swear, and Man will storm—
Man is not at all good form—

Man is of no kind of use—
Man's a donkey—Man's a goose—
Man is coarse, and Man is plain—
Man is more or less insane—
Man's a ribald—Man's a rake,
Man is Nature's sole mistake!

CHORUS.

We'll a memorandum make—
Man is Nature's sole mistake!

And thus to empyrean height
Of every kind of lore,
In search of wisdom's pure delight,
Ambitiously we soar.
In trying to achieve success
No envy racks our heart,
For all we know and all we guess,
We mutually impart!

Enter LADY BLANCHE. *All stand up demurely.*

Bla. Attention, ladies, while I read to you
The Princess Ida's list of punishments.
The first is Sacharissa. She's expelled!

All. Expelled!

Bla. Expelled, because although she knew
No man of any kind may pass our walls,
She dared to bring a set of chessmen here!

Sach. (*crying*). I meant no harm; they're only men of wood!

Bla. They're men with whom you give each other mate,
And that's enough! The next is Chloe.

Chloe. Ah!

Bla. Chloe will lose three terms, for yesterday,
When looking through her drawing-book, I found
A sketch of a perambulator!

All (*horrified*). Oh!

Bla. Double perambulator, shameless girl!
That's all at present. Now, attention, pray!
Your Principal the Princess comes to give
Her usual inaugural address
To those young ladies who joined yesterday.

Enter the PRINCESS.

CHORUS.

Mighty maiden with a mission,
Paragon of common sense,
Running fount of erudition,
Miracle of eloquence,

We are blind, and we would see;
We are bound, and would be free;
We are dumb, and we would talk;
We are lame, and we would walk.
Mighty maiden with a mission—
Paragon of common sense;
Running fount of erudition—
Miracle of eloquence!

Prin. (*Recit.*) Minerva! hear me:

ARIA.

At this my call
A fervent few
Have come to woo
The rays that from thee fall.

Oh, goddess wise
That lovest light,
Endow with sight
Their unillumined eyes.
Let fervent words and fervent thoughts be mine,
That I may lead them to thy sacred shrine!

Women of Adamant, fair Neophytes—
Who thirst for such instruction as we give,
Attend, while I unfold a parable.
The elephant is mightier than Man,
Yet Man subdues him. Why? The elephant
Is elephantine everywhere but here (*tapping her forehead*).
And Man, whose brain is to the elephant's,
As Woman's brain to Man's—(that's rule of three)—
Conquers the foolish giant of the woods,
As Woman, in her turn, shall conquer Man.
In Mathematics, Woman leads the way—
The narrow-minded pedant still believes
That two and two make four! Why we can prove,
We women—household drudges as we are—
That two and two make five—or three—or seven;
Or five and twenty, if the case demands!
Diplomacy? The wiliest diplomate
Is absolutely helpless in our hands,
He wheedles monarchs—woman wheedles him!
Logic? Why, tyrant Man himself admits
It's waste of time to argue with a woman!
Then we excel in social qualities:
Though Man professes that he holds our sex
In utter scorn, I venture to believe
He'd rather spend the day with one of you,
Than with five hundred of his fellow-men!

In all things we excel. Believing this,
A hundred maidens here have sworn to place
Their feet upon his neck. If we succeed,
We'll treat him better than he treated us:
But if we fail, why then let hope fail too!
Let no one care a penny how she looks—
Let red be worn with yellow—blue with green—
Crimson with scarlet—violet with blue!
Let all your things misfit, and you yourselves,
At inconvenient moments come undone!
Let hair-pins lose their virtue: let the hook
Disdain the fascination of the eye—
The bashful button modestly evade
The soft embraces of the button-hole!
Let old associations all dissolve,
Let Swan secede from Edgar—Gask from Gask,
Sewell from Cross—Lewis from Allenby!
In other words—let Chaos come again!
(*Coming down*) Who lectures in the Hall of Arts to-day?

Bla. I, madam, on Abstract Philosophy.
There I propose considering, at length,
Three points—The Is, the Might Be, and the Must:
Whether the Is, from being actual fact,
Is more important than the vague Might Be,
Or the Might Be, from taking wider scope,
Is for that reason greater than the Is:
And lastly, how the Is and Might Be stand
Compared with the inevitable Must!

Prin. The subject's deep—how do you treat it, pray?

Bla. Madam, I take three possibilities,
And strike a balance, then, between the three!
As thus: The Princess Ida Is our head,
The Lady Psyche Might Be—Lady Blanche,
Neglected Blanche, inevitably Must.
Given these three hypotheses—to find
The actual betting against each of them!

Prin. Your theme's ambitious: pray you bear in mind
Who highest soar fall farthest. Fare you well,
You and your pupils! Maidens, follow me.

[*Exeunt* PRINCESS *and* Maidens, *singing refrain of chorus*, "*And thus to empyrean heights*," *etc.*
Manet LADY BLANCHE.

Bla. I should command here—I was born to rule.
But do I rule? I don't. Why? I don't know.
I shall some day. Not yet. I bide my time.

I once was Some One—and the Was Will Be.
The Present as we speak becomes the Past,
The Past repeats itself, and so is Future!
This sounds involved. It's not. It's right enough.

SONG.—LADY BLANCHE.

Come mighty Must!
  Inevitable Shall!
In thee I trust.
  Time weaves my coronal!
Go, mocking Is!
  Go, disappointing Was!
That I am this
  Ye are the cursed cause!
Yet humble second shall be first,
    I ween;
And dead and buried be the curst
    Has Been!

Oh, weak Might Be!
  Oh, May, Might, Could, Would, Should!
How powerless ye
  For evil or for good!
In every sense
  Your moods I cheerless call,
Whate'er your tense
  Ye are Imperfect, all!
Ye have deceived the trust that I've shown
  In ye!
Away! The Mighty Must alone
  Shall be!

[*Exit* LADY BLANCHE.

Enter HILARION, CYRIL, *and* FLORIAN, *climbing over wall, and creeping cautiously among the trees and rocks at the back of the stage.*

TRIO.—HILARION, CYRIL, FLORIAN.

Gently, gently,
Evidently
  We are safe so far,
After scaling
Fence and paling,
  Here, at last, we are!
In this college
Useful knowledge
  Everywhere one finds,
And already,
Growing steady,
  We've enlarged our minds.

Cyr. We've learnt that prickly cactus
Has the power to attract us
When we fall.

All. When we fall!

Hil. That nothing man unsettles
Like a bed of stinging nettles,
Short or tall.

All. Short or tall!

Flor. That bull-dogs feed on throttles—
That we don't like broken bottles
On a wall.

All. On a wall!

Hil. That spring-guns breathe defiance!
And that burglary's a science
After all.

All. After all!

RECITATIVE.—FLORIAN.

A Woman's college! maddest folly going!
What can girls learn within its walls worth knowing?
I'll lay a crown (the Princess shall decide it)
I'll teach them twice as much in half an hour outside it.

HILARION.

Hush, scoffer; ere you sound your puny thunder,
List to their aims, and bow your head in wonder!

They intend to send a wire
To the moon—to the moon;
And they'll set the Thames on fire
Very soon—very soon;
Then they learn to make silk purses
With their rigs—with their rigs
From the ears of Lady Circe's
Piggy-wigs—piggy-wigs.
And weazels at their slumbers
They trepan—they trepan;
To get sunbeams from cucumbers
They've a plan—they've a plan.
They've a firmly rooted notion
They can cross the Polar Ocean,
And they'll find Perpetual Motion,
If they can—if they can.

These are the phenomena
That every pretty domina
Hopes that we shall see
At this Universitee.

All. These are the phenomena
That every pretty domina
Hopes that we shall see
At this Universitee!

Cyr. As for fashion, they forswear it,
So they say—so they say—
And the circle—they will square it
Some fine day—some fine day—
Then the little pigs they're teaching
For to fly—for to fly;
And the niggers they'll be bleaching,
By-and-by—by-and-by!
Each newly joined aspirant
To the clan—to the clan—
Must repudiate the tyrant
Known as Man—known as Man—
They mock at him and flout him,
For they do not care about him,
And they're "going to do without him"
If they can—if they can!

These are the phenomena
That every pretty domina
Hopes that we shall see
At this Universitee.

All. These are the phenomena, etc.

Hil. So that's the Princess Ida's castle! Well,
They must be lovely girls, indeed, if it requires
Such walls as those to keep intruders off!
Cyr. To keep men off is only half their charge,
And that the easier half. I much suspect
The object of these walls is not so much
To keep men off as keep the maidens in!
Flo. But what are these?
[*Examining some collegiate robes.*
Hil. (*looking at them*). Why, Academic robes,
Worn by the lady undergraduates,
When they matriculate. Let's try them on. [*They do so.*
Why, see—we're covered to the very toes.
Three lovely lady undergraduates
Who, weary of the world and all its wooing—
Flo. And penitent for deeds there's no undoing—
Cyr. Looked at askance by well-conducted maids—
All. Seek sanctuary in these classic shades!

TRIO.—HILARION, CYRIL, FLORIAN.

Hil. I am a maiden, cold and stately,
Heartless I, with a face divine.
What do I want with a heart, innately?
Every heart I meet is mine!

All. Haughty, humble, coy, or free,
Little care I what maid may be.

So that a maid is fair to see,
Every maid is the maid for me! [*Dance.*

Cyr. I am a maiden frank and simple,
Brimming with joyous roguery;
Merriment lurks in every dimple,
Nobody breaks more hearts than I!

All. Haughty, humble, coy, or free,
Little care I what maid may be.
So that a maid is fair to see,
Every maid is the maid for me! [*Dance.*

Flo. I am a maiden coyly blushing,
Timid I as a startled hind;
Every suitor sets me flushing:
I am the maid that wins mankind.

All. Haughty, humble, coy, or free,
Little care I what maid may be.
So that a maid is fair to see,
Every maid is the maid for me!

Enter the PRINCESS, *reading. She does not see them.*

Flo. But who comes here? The Princess, as I live!
What shall we do?

Hil. (*aside*). Why, we must brave it out!
(*Aloud*). Madam, accept our humblest reverence.

[*They bow, then suddenly recollecting themselves, curtsy.*

Prin. (*surprised*). We greet you, ladies. What would you with us?

Hil. (*aside*). What shall I say? (*Aloud.*) We are three students, ma'am,
Three well-born maids of liberal estate,
Who wish to join this University.

[HILARION *and* FLORIAN *curtsy again.* CYRIL *bows extravagantly, then, being recalled to himself by* FLORIAN, *curtsys.*

Prin. If, as you say, you wish to join our ranks,
And will subscribe to all our rules, 'tis well.

Flo. To all your rules we cheerfully subscribe.

Prin. You say you're noblewomen. Well, you'll find
No sham degrees for noblewomen here.
You'll find no sizars here, or servitors,
Or other cruel distinctions, meant to draw
A line 'twixt rich and poor: you'll find no tufts
To mark nobility, except such tufts
As indicate nobility of brain.
As for your fellow-students, mark me well:

There are a hundred maids within these walls,
All good, all learned, and all beautiful:
They are prepared to love you: will you swear
To give the fulness of your love to them?
Hil. Upon our words and honours, ma'am, we will!
Prin. But we go further: will you undertake
That you will never marry any man?
Flo. Indeed we never will!
Prin. Consider well,
You must prefer our maids to all mankind!
Hil. To all mankind we much prefer your maids!
Cyr. We should be dolts indeed, if we did not,
Seeing how fair—
Hil. (*aside to* CYRIL). Take care—that's rather strong!
Prin. But have you left no lovers at your home
Who may pursue you here?
Hil. No, madam, none.
We're homely ladies, as no doubt you see,
And we have never fished for lover's love.
We smile at girls who deck themselves with gems,
False hair, and meretricious ornament,
To chain the fleeting fancy of a man,
But do not imitate them. What we have
Of hair, is all our own. Our colour, too,
Unladylike, but not unwomanly,
Is Nature's handiwork, and man has learnt
To reckon Nature an impertinence.
Prin. Well, beauty counts for naught within these walls;
If all you say is true, you'll spend with us
A happy, happy time!
Cyr. If, as you say,
A hundred lovely maidens wait within,
To welcome us with smiles and open arms,
I think there's very little doubt we shall!

QUARTETTE.—PRINCESS, HILARION, CYRIL, FLORIAN.

Prin. The world is but a broken toy,
Its pleasure hollow—false its joy,
Unreal its loveliest hue.
Alas!
Its pains alone are true,
Alas!
Its pains alone are true.

Hil. The world is everything you say,
The world we think has had its day,
Its merriment is slow,

Alas!
We've tried it, and we know,
Alas!
We've tried it and we know.

TUTTI.

PRINCESS.
The world is but a broken toy,
Its pleasures hollow—false its joy,
Unreal its loveliest hue.
Alas!
Its pains alone are true,
Alas!
Its pains alone are true!

HILARION, CYRIL, FLORIAN.
The world is but a broken toy,
We freely give it up with joy,
Unreal its loveliest hue.
Alas!
We quite agree with you,
Alas!
We quite agree with you!

[*Exit* PRINCESS. *The three* Gentlemen *watch her off.*

LADY PSYCHE *enters, and regards them with amazement.*

Hil. I'faith, the plunge is taken, gentlemen!
For, willy-nilly, we are maidens now,
And maids against our will we must remain!
[*All laugh heartily.*

Psy. (*aside*). These ladies are unseemly in their mirth.
[*The* Gentlemen *see her, and, in confusion, resume their modest demeanour.*

Flo. (*aside.*) Here's a catastrophe, Hilarion!
This is my sister! She'll remember me,
Though years have passed since she and I have met!

Hil. (*aside to* FLORIAN). Then make a virtue of necessity
And trust our secret to her gentle care.

Flor. (*to* PSYCHE, *who has watched* CYRIL *in amazement*). Psyche.
Why, don't you know me? Florian!

Psy. (*amazed*). Why, Florian!

Flor. My sister! (*Embraces her.*)

Psy. Oh, my dear!
What are you doing here—and who are these?

Hil. I am that Prince Hilarion to whom
Your Princess is betrothed. I come to claim
Her plighted love. Your brother Florian
And Cyril, come to see me safely through.

Psy. The Prince Hilarion? Cyril too? How strange!
My earliest playfellows!

Hil. Why, let me look!
Are you that learned little Psyche who
At school alarmed her mates because she called
A buttercup "ranunculus bulbosus?"

Cyr. Are you indeed that Lady Psyche who
At children's parties drove the conjuror wild,
Explaining all his tricks before he did them?
Hil. Are you that learned little Psyche, who
At dinner parties, brought into dessert,
Would tackle visitors with "You don't know
Who first determined longitude—I do—
Hipparchus 'twas—B.C. one sixty-three!"
Are you indeed that small phenomenon?
Psy. That small phenomenon indeed am I!
But, gentlemen, 'tis death to enter here:
We have all promised to renounce mankind!
Flo. Renounce mankind? On what ground do you base
This senseless resolution?
Psy. Senseless? No.
We are all taught, and, being taught, believe
That Man, sprung from an Ape, is Ape at heart.
Cyr. That's rather strong.
Psy. The truth is always strong.

SONG.—LADY PSYCHE.

The Ape and the Lady.

A Lady fair, of lineage high,
Was loved by an Ape, in the days gone by—
The Maid was radiant as the sun,
The Ape was a most unsightly one—
So it would not do—
His scheme fell through,
For the Maid, when his love took formal shape,
Expressed such terror
At his monstrous error,
That he stammered an apology and made his 'scape,
The picture of a disconcerted Ape.

With a view to rise in the social scale,
He shaved his bristles, and he docked his tail,
He grew moustachios, and he took his tub,
And he paid a guinea to a toilet club—
But it would not do,
The scheme fell through—
For the Maid was Beauty's fairest Queen,
With golden tresses,
Like a real princess's,
While the Ape, despite his razor keen,
Was the apiest Ape that ever was seen!

He bought white ties, and he bought dress suits,
He crammed his feet into bright tight boots—
And to start in life on a bran new plan,
He christened himself Darwinian Man!

But it would not do,
The scheme fell through—
For the Maiden fair, whom the monkey craved,
Was a radiant Being,
With a brain far-seeing—
While a Man, however well-behaved,
At best is only a monkey shaved!

During this MELISSA *has entered unobserved: she looks on in amazement.*

Mel. (*coming down*). Oh, Lady Psyche!
Psy. (*terrified*). What! you heard us then?
Oh, all is lost!
Mel. Not so! I'll breathe no word!
[*Advancing in astonishment to* FLORIAN.
How marvellously strange! and are you then
Indeed young men?
Flo. Well, yes, just now we are—
But hope by dint of study to become,
In course of time, young women.
Mel. (*eagerly*). No, no, no—
Oh, don't do that! Is this indeed a man?
I've often heard of them, but, till to-day,
Never set eyes on one. They told me men
Were hideous, idiotic, and deformed!
They're quite as beautiful as women are!
As beautiful, they're infinitely more so!
Their cheeks have not that pulpy softness which
One gets so weary of in womankind:
Their features are more marked—and—oh, their chins!
How curious! [*Feeling his chin.*
Flo. I fear it's rather rough.
Mel. (*eagerly*). Oh, don't apologize—I like it so!

QUINTETTE.—PSYCHE, MELISSA, HILARION, CYRIL, FLORIAN.

Psy. The woman of the wisest wit
May sometimes be mistaken, O!
In Ida's views, I must admit,
My faith is somewhat shaken, O!

Cyr. On every other point than this,
Her learning is unshaken, O!
But Man's a theme with which she is
Entirely unacquainted, O!
—acquainted, O!
—acquainted, O!
Entirely unacquainted, O!

All. Then jump for joy and gaily bound,
The truth is found—the truth is found!
Set bells a-ringing through the air—
Ring here and there and everywhere—
And echo forth the joyous sound,
The truth is found—the truth is found! [*Dance.*

Mel. My natural instinct teaches me
(And instinct is important, O!)
You're everything you ought to be,
And nothing that you oughtn't, O!

Hil. That fact was seen at once by you
In casual conversation, O!
Which is most creditable to
Your powers of observation, O!
—servation, O!
—servation, O!
Your powers of observation, O!

All. Then jump for joy, etc.

[*Exeunt* PSYCHE, HILARION, CYRIL, *and* FLORIAN. MELISSA *going.*

Enter LADY BLANCHE.

Bla. Melissa!
Mel. (*returning*). Mother!
Bla. Here—a word with you.
Those are the three new students?
Mel. (*confused*). Yes, they are.
They're charming girls.
Bla. Particularly so.
So graceful, and so very womanly!
So skilled in all a girl's accomplishments!
Mel. (*confused*). Yes—very skilled.
Bla. They sing so nicely too!
Mel. They *do* sing nicely!
Bla. Humph! It's very odd.
One is a tenor, two are baritones!
Mel. (*much agitated*). They've all got colds!
Bla. Colds! Bah! D'ye think I'm blind?
These "girls" are men disguised!
Mel. Oh no—indeed!
You wrong these gentlemen—I mean—why see,
Here is an *étui* dropped by one of them (*picking up an étui*),
Containing scissors, needles, and—
Bla. (*opening it.*) Cigars!
Why these *are* men! And you knew this, you minx.

Mel. Oh, spare them—they are gentlemen indeed.
The Prince Hilarion (married years ago
To Princess Ida) with two trusted friends!
Consider, mother, he's her husband now,
And has been, twenty years! Consider too,
You're only second here—you should be first.
Assist the Prince's plan, and when he gains
The Princess Ida, why, you *will* be first.
You will design the fashions—think of that—
And always serve out all the punishments!
The scheme is harmless, mother—wink at it!

Bla. (*aside*). The prospect's tempting! Well, well, well, I'll try—
Though I've not winked at anything for years!
'Tis but one step towards my destiny—
The mighty Must! the inevitable Shall!

DUET.—MELISSA and LADY BLANCHE.

Mel. Now wouldn't you like to rule the roast,
And guide this University?
Bla. I must agree
'Twould pleasant be.
(Sing hey a Proper Pride!)

Mel. And wouldn't you like to clear the coast
Of malice and perversity?
Bla. Without a doubt
I'll bundle 'em out,
Sing hey, when I preside!

Both. Sing, hoity, toity! Sorry for some!
Marry come up, and {my / her} day will come!
Sing Proper Pride
Is the horse to ride,
And Happy-go-lucky, my Lady, O!

Bla. For years I've writhed beneath her sneers,
Although a born Plantagenet!
Mel. You're much too meek,
Or you would speak.
(Sing hey, I'll say no more!)

Bla. Her elder I, by several years,
Although you'd never imagine it.
Mel. Sing, so I've heard
But never a word
Have I ever believed before!

Both. Sing, hoity, toity! Sorry for some!
Marry come up, {my / her} day will come!

Sing, she shall learn
That a worm will turn.
Sing, Happy-go-lucky, my Lady, O!

[*Exit* LADY BLANCHE.

Mel. Saved for a time, at least!

Enter FLORIAN, *on tiptoe.*

Flo. (*whispering*). Melissa—come!

Mel. Oh, sir! you must away from this at once—
My mother guessed your sex! It was my fault—
I blushed and stammered so that she exclaimed,
"Can these be men?" Then, seeing this, "Why these——"
"*Are men*," she would have added, but "*are men*"
Stuck in her throat! She keeps your secret, sir,
For reasons of her own—but, fly from this
And take me with you—that is—no—not that!

Flo. I'll go, but not without you! (*Bell.*) Why, what's that?

Mel. The luncheon bell.

Flo. I'll wait for luncheon then!

Enter HILARION *with* PRINCESS, CYRIL *with* PSYCHE, LADY BLANCHE *and* Ladies. *Also* "Daughters of the Plough" *bearing luncheon, which they spread on the rocks.*

CHORUS.

Merrily ring the luncheon bell!
Here in meadow of asphodel,
Feast we body and mind as well,
So merrily ring the luncheon bell!

SOLO.—BLANCHE.

Hunger, I beg to state,
Is highly indelicate,
This is a fact profoundly true
So learn your appetites to subdue.

All. Yes, yes,
We'll learn our appetites to subdue!

SOLO.—CYRIL (*eating*).

Madam, your words so wise,
Nobody should despise,
Cursed with an appetite keen I am
And I'll subdue it—
And I'll subdue it—
And I'll subdue it with cold roast lamb!

All. Yes, yes—
We'll subdue it with cold roast lamb!
Chorus. Merrily ring, etc.

Prin. You say you know the court of Hildebrand?
There is a Prince there—I forget his name—
Hil. Hilarion?
Prin. Exactly—is he well?
Hil. If it be well to droop and pine and mope,
To sigh "Oh, Ida! Ida!" all day long,
"Ida! my love! my life! Oh come to me!"
If it be well, I say, to do all this,
Then Prince Hilarion is very well.
Prin. He breathes *our* name? Well, it's a common one!
And is the booby comely?
Hil. Pretty well.
I've heard it said that if I dressed myself
In Prince Hilarion's clothes (supposing this
Consisted with my maiden modesty),
I might be taken for Hilarion's self.
But what is this to you or me, who think
Of all mankind with undisguised contempt?
Prin. Contempt? Why, damsel, when I think of man,
Contempt is not the word.
Cyr. (*getting tipsy*). I'm sure of that,
Or if it is, it surely should not be!
Hil. (*aside to* CYRIL). Be quiet, idiot, or they'll find us out.
Cyr. The Prince Hilarion's a goodly lad!
Prin. You know him then?
Cyr. (*tipsily*). I rather think I do!
We are inseparables!
Prin. Why, what's this?
You love him, then?
Cyr. We do indeed—all three!
Hil. Madam, she jests! (*Aside to* CYRIL.) Remember where you are!
Cyr. Jests? Not at all! Why, bless my heart alive,
You and Hilarion, when at the Court,
Rode the same horse!
Prin. (*horrified*). Astride?
Cyr. Of course! Why not?
Wore the same clothes—and once or twice, I think,
Got tipsy in the same good company!
Prin. Well, these are nice young ladies, on my word!

Cyr. (*tipsy*). Don't you remember that old kissing-song
He'd sing to blushing Mistress Lalage,
The hostess of the Pigeons? Thus it ran:

SONG.—CYRIL.

[*During symphony* HILARION *and* FLORIAN *try to stop* CYRIL. *He shakes them off angrily.*

Would you know the kind of maid
Sets my heart a flame-a?
Eyes must be downcast and staid,
Cheeks must flush for shame-a!
She may neither dance nor sing,
But, demure in everything,
Hang her head in modest way,
With pouting lips that seem to say
"Kiss me, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me,
Though I die of shame-a,"
Please you, that's the kind of maid
Sets my heart a flame-a!

When a maid is bold and gay
With a tongue goes clang-a,
Flaunting it in brave array,
Maiden may go hang-a!
Sunflower gay and hollyhock
Never shall my garden stock;
Mine the blushing rose of May,
With pouting lips that seem to say,
"Oh, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me,
Though I die for shame-a!"
Please you that's the kind of maid
Sets my heart a flame-a!

Prin. Infamous creature, get you hence away!
[HILARION, *who has been with difficulty restrained by* FLORIAN *during this song, breaks from him and strikes* CYRIL *furiously on the breast.*
Hil. Dog! there is something more to sing about!
Cyr. (*sobered*). Hilarion, are you mad?
Prin. (*horrified*). Hilarion? Help!
Why these are men! Lost! lost! betrayed! undone!
[*Running on to bridge.*
Girls, get you hence! Man-monsters, if you dare
Approach one step, I—— Ah!
[*Loses her balance, and falls into the stream.*
Psy. Oh! save her, sir!
Bla. It's useless, sir—you'll only catch your death!
[HILARION *springs in.*
Sach. He catches her!
Mel. And now he lets her go!

Again she's in his grasp——
Psy. And now she's not.
He seizes her back hair!
Bla. (*not looking*). And it comes off!
Psy. No, no! She's saved!—she's saved!—she's saved!
—she's saved!

[HILARION *is seen swimming with* PRINCESS *in one arm. The* PRINCESS *and he are brought to land.*

FINALE.

CHORUS OF LADIES.

Oh! joy, our chief is saved,
And by Hilarion's hand;
The torrent fierce he braved,
And brought her safe to land!
For his intrusion we must own
This doughty deed may well atone;

Prin. Stand forth ye three,
Whoe'er ye be,
And hearken to our stern decree;

Hil., Cyr., and Flo. Have mercy, lady—disregard your oaths!
Prin. I know not mercy, men in women's clothes!
The man whose sacrilegious eyes
Invade our strict seclusion, dies.
Arrest these coarse intruding spies!

[*They are arrested by the* "Daughters of the Plough."

Flo., Cyr., and Ladies. Have mercy lady—disregard your oaths!
Prin. I know not mercy, men in women's clothes.

[CYRIL *and* FLORIAN *are bound.*

SONG.—HILARION.

Whom thou hast chained must wear his chain,
Thou canst not set him free,
He wrestles with his bonds in vain
Who lives by loving thee!
If heart of stone for heart of fire,
Be all thou hast to give,
If dead to me my heart's desire,
Why should I wish to live?

No word of thine—no stern command
Can teach my heart to rove,
Then rather perish by thy hand,
Than live without thy love!
A loveless life apart from thee
Were hopeless slavery,
If kindly death will set me free,
Why should I fear to die?

[*He is bound by two of the attendants, and the three* Gentlemen *are marched off.*

Enter MELISSA.

Mel. Madam, without the castle walls
An armed band
Demand admittance to our halls
For Hildebrand!

All. Oh, horror!

Prin. Deny them;
We will defy them!

All. Too late—too late!
The castle gate
Is battered by them!

[*The gate yields.* HILDEBRAND *and* Soldiers *rush in.* ARAC, GURON, *and* SCYNTHIUS *are with them, but with their hands handcuffed.*

All (*Soldiers and Ladies*). Too late—too late,
The castle gate
Is battered by them!

ENSEMBLE.

GIRLS.

Rend the air with wailing,
Shed the shameful tear!
Walls are unavailing,
Man has entered here!
Shame and desecration
Are his staunch allies,
Let your lamentation
Echo to the skies!

MEN.

Walls and fences scaling,
Promptly we appear;
Walls are unavailing,
We have entered here.
Female execration
Stifle if you're wise,
Stop your lamentation,
Dry your pretty eyes!

RECITATIVE.

Prin. Audacious tyrant, do you dare
To beard a maiden in her lair?

King. Since you inquire,
We've no desire
To beard a maiden here, or anywhere!

Sol. No, no—we've no desire
To beard a maiden here, or anywhere.

SOLO.—HILDEBRAND.

Some years ago,
No doubt you know
(And if you don't I'll tell you so),
You gave your troth
Upon your oath
To Hilarion my son.
A vow you make
You must not break,
(If you think you may, it's a great mistake,)

For a bride's a bride
Though the knot were tied
At the early age of one!
And I'm a peppery kind of King,
Who's indisposed for parleying
To fit the wit of a bit of a chit,
And that's the long and the short of it!

All. For he's a peppery kind of King, etc.

If you decide
To pocket your pride,
And let Hilarion claim his bride,
Why, well and good,
It's understood
We'll let bygones go by—
But if you choose
To sulk in the blues,
I'll make the whole of you shake in your shoes.
I'll storm your walls,
And level your halls,
In the twinkling of an eye!
For I'm a peppery Potentate,
Who's little inclined his claim to bate,
To fit the wit of a bit of a chit,
And that's the long and the short of it.

TRIO.—ARAC, GURON, AND SCYNTHIUS.

We may remark, though nothing can
Dismay us,
That, if you thwart this gentleman,
He'll slay us,
We don't fear death, of course—we're taught
To shame it;
But still upon the whole we thought
We'd name it,
(*To each other*). Yes, yes, better perhaps to name it.

Our interests we would not press
With chatter,
Three hulking brothers more or less
Don't matter;
If you'd pooh-pooh this monarch's plan,
Pooh-pooh it,
But when he says he'll hang a man,
He'll do it.
(*To each other*). Yes, yes, devil doubt he'll do it.

Prin. (*Recit.*). Be reassured, nor fear his anger blind,
His menaces are idle as the wind.
He dares not kill you—vengeance lurks behind!

Ar., Gur., Scyn. *We* rather think he dares, but never mind;
No, no,—never, never mind

King. Enough of parley—as a special boon—
We give you till to-morrow afternoon!

Release Hilarion, then, and be his bride,
Or you'll incur the guilt of fraticide!

ENSEMBLE.

PRINCESS.

To yield at once to such a foe
With shame were rife;
So quick; away with him, although
He saved my life!
That he is fair, and strong, and tall,
Is very evident to all,
Yet I will die before I call
Myself his wife!

THE OTHERS.

Oh! yield at once, 'twere better so
Than risk a strife!
And let the Prince Hilarion go—
He saved thy life!
Hilarion's fair, and strong, and tall—
A worse misfortune might befal—
It's not so dreadful, after all,
To be his wife!

SOLO.—PRINCESS.

Though I am but a girl,
Defiance thus I hurl,
Our banners all
On outer wall
We fearlessly unfurl.

All. Though she is but a girl, etc.

PRINCESS. That he is fair, etc.

THE OTHERS. Hilarion's fair, etc.

[*The* PRINCESS *stands, surrounded by the* Girls *kneeling. The* KING *and* Soldiers *stand on built rocks at back and sides of stage. Picture.*

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Outer Walls and Courtyard of Castle Adamant.* MELISSA, SACHARISSA, *and* Ladies *discovered, armed with battle-axes.*

CHORUS.

Death to the invader!
Strike a deadly blow,
As an old Crusader
Struck his Paynim foe!
Let our martial thunder
Fill his soul with wonder,
Tear his ranks asunder,
Lay the tyrant low!

SOLO.—MELISSA.

Thus our courage, all untarnished
We're instructed to display:
But, to tell the truth unvarnished,
We are more inclined to say,
"Please you, do not hurt us."

All. "Do not hurt us, if it please you!"
Mel. "Please you let us be."
All. "Let us be—let us be!"
Mel. "Soldiers disconcert us."
All. "Disconcert us, if it please you!"
Mel. "Frightened maids are we."
All. "Maids are we—maids are we!"

MELISSA.

But 'twould be an error
To confess our terror,
So, in Ida's name,
Boldly we exclaim:

CHORUS.

Death to the invader
Strike a deadly blow,
As an old Crusader
Struck his Paynim foe
Let our martial thunder
Fill his soul with wonder,
Tear his ranks asunder,
Lay the tyrant low!

Flourish. *Enter* PRINCESS, *armed, attended by* BLANCHE *and* PSYCHE.

Prin. I like your spirit, girls! We have to meet
Stern bearded warriors in fight to-day:
Wear naught but what is necessary to
Preserve your dignity before their eyes,
And give your limbs full play.
Bla. One moment, ma'am.
Here is a paradox we should not pass
Without inquiry. We are prone to say
"This thing is Needful—that, Superfluous"—
Yet they invariably co-exist!
We find the Needful comprehended in
The circle of the grand Superfluous,
Yet the Superfluous cannot be bought
Unless you're amply furnished with the Needful.
These singular considerations are—
Prin. Superfluous, yet not Needful—so you see

The terms may independently exist.
(*To* Ladies.) Women of Adamant, we have to show
That Woman, educated to the task,
Can meet Man, face to face, on his own ground,
And beat him there. Now let us set to work;
Where is our lady surgeon?
Sac. Madam, here!
Prin. We shall require your skill to heal the wounds
Of those that fall.
Sac. (*alarmed*). What, heal the wounded?
Prin. Yes!
Sac. And cut off real live legs and arms?
Prin. Of course!
Sac. I wouldn't do it for a thousand pounds!
Prin. Why, how is this? Are you faint-hearted, girl?
You've often cut them off in theory!
Sac. In theory I'll cut them off again,
With pleasure, and as often as you like,
But not in practice.
Prin. Coward! get you hence,
I've craft enough for that, and courage too;
I'll do your work. My fusiliers, advance!
Why, you are armed with axes! Gilded toys!
Where are your rifles, pray?
Chloe. Why, please you, ma'am,
We left them in the armoury, for fear
That in the heat and turmoil of the fight
They might go off!
Prin. "They might!" Oh, craven souls!
Go off yourselves! Thank Heaven, I have a heart
That quails not at the thought of meeting men;
I will discharge your rifles! Off with you!
Where's my bandmistress?
Ada. Please you, ma'am, the band
Do not feel well, and can't come out to-day!
Prin. Why, this is flat rebellion! I've no time
To talk to them just now. But, happily,
I can play several instruments at once,
And I will drown the shrieks of those that fall
With trumpet music, such as soldiers love!
How stand we with respect to gunpowder?
My Lady Psyche—you who superintend
Our lab'ratory—are you well prepared
To blow these bearded rascals into shreds?
Psy. Why, madam—

Prin. Well?
Psy. Let us try gentler means.
We can dispense with fulminating grains
While we have eyes with which to flash our rage!
We can dispense with villainous saltpetre
While we have tongues with which to blow them up!
We can dispense, in short, with all the arts
That brutalize the practical polemist!
Prin. (*contemptuously*). I never knew a more dispensing chemist!
Away, away—I'll meet these men alone,
Since all my women have deserted me!
[*Exeunt all but* PRINCESS, *singing refrain of "Death to the Invader," pianissimo.*
Pri. So fail my cherished plans—so fails my faith—
And with it hope, and all that comes of hope!

SONG.—PRINCESS.

I built upon a rock;
But ere Destruction's hand
Dealt equal lot
To Court and cot,
My rock had turned to sand!
Ah, faithless rock,
My simple faith to mock!

I leant upon an oak;
But in the hour of need,
Alack-a-day,
My trusted stay
Was but a bruised reed!
Ah, trait'rous oak,
Thy worthlessness to cloak!

I drew a sword of steel;
But when to home and hearth
The battle's breath
Bore fire and death,
My sword was but a lath!
Ah, coward steel,
That fear can unanneal!

[*She sinks on a bank*

Enter CHLOE *and all the* Ladies.

Chloe. Madam, your father and your brothers claim
An audience!
Prin. What do they do here?
Chloe. They come
To fight for you!

Prin. Admit them!
Bla. Infamous!
One's brothers, ma'am, are men!
Prin. So I have heard;
But all my women seem to fail me when
I need them most. In this emergency,
Even one's brothers may be turned to use.

Enter GAMA, *quite pale and unnerved.*

Gama. My daughter!
Prin. Father! thou art free!
Gama. Ay, free!
Free as a tethered ass! I come to thee
With words from Hildebrand. Those duly given,
I must return to black captivity.
I'm free so far.
Prin. Your message.
Gama. Hildebrand
Is loth to war with women. Pit my sons,
My three brave sons, against these popinjays,
These tufted jack-a-dandy featherheads,
And on the issue let thy hand depend!
Prin. Insult on insult's head! Are we a stake
For fighting men? What fiend possesses thee,
That thou hast come with offers such as these
From such as he to such an one as I?
Gama. I am possessed
By the pale devil of a shaking heart!
My stubborn will is bent. I dare not face
That devilish monarch's black malignity!
He tortures me with torments worse than death,
I haven't anything to grumble at!
He finds out what particular meats I love,
And gives me them. The very choicest wines,
The costliest robes—the richest rooms are mine:
He suffers none to thwart my simplest plan,
And gives strict orders none should contradict me!
He's made my life a curse! [*Weeps.*
Prin. My tortured father!

SONG.—GAMA.

Whene'er I spoke
Sarcastic joke
Replete with malice spiteful,

This people mild
Politely smiled,
And voted me delightful!
Now when a wight
Sits up all night
Ill-natured jokes devising,
And all his wiles
Are met with smiles,
It's hard, there's no disguising!
Oh, don't the days seem lank and long
When all goes right and nothing goes wrong,
And isn't your life extremely flat
With nothing whatever to grumble at!

When German bands
From music stands
Played Wagner imper*fectly*—
I bade them go—
They didn't say no,
But off they went directly!
The organ boys
They stopped their noise
With readiness surprising,
And grinning herds
Of hurdy-gurds
Retired apologizing!
Oh, don't the days seem lank and long, etc.

I offered gold
In sums untold
To all who'd contradict me—
I said I'd pay
A pound a day
To any one who kicked me—
I bribed with toys
Great vulgar boys
To utter something spiteful,
But, bless you, no!
They *would* be so
Confoundedly politeful!

In short, these aggravating lads
They tickle my tastes, they feed my fads,
They give me this and they give me that,
And I've nothing whatever to grumble at!

[*He bursts into tears, and falls sobbing on a bank.*

Prin. My poor old father! How he must have suffered! Well, well, I yield!

Gama. (*hysterically*). She yields! I'm saved, I'm saved!

Prin. Open the gates—admit these warriors,
Then get you all within the castle walls.

[*The gates are opened, and the* Girls *mount the battlements as* HILDEBRAND *enters with* Soldiers. *Also* ARAC, GURON, *and* SCYNTHIUS.

CHORUS OF SOLDIERS.

When anger spreads his wing,
And all seems dark as night for it,
There's nothing but to fight for it,
But ere you pitch your ring,
Select a pretty site for it,
(This spot is suited quite for it),
And then you gaily sing,

"Oh, I love the jolly rattle
Of an ordeal by battle,
There's an end of tittle-tattle,
When your enemy is dead.
It's an arrant molley coddle,
Fears a crack upon the noddle,
And he's only fit to swaddle,
In a downy feather-bed!—

All. For a fight's a kind of thing
That I love to look upon,
So let us sing,
Long live the King,
And his son Hilarion!

[*During this,* HILARION, FLORIAN, *and* CYRIL *are brought out by the* "Daughters of the Plough." *They are still bound and wear the robes.*

Gama. Hilarion! Cyril! Florian! dressed as women!
Is this indeed Hilarion?
Hil. Yes, it is!
Gama. Why, you look handsome in your women's clothes!
Stick to 'em! men's attire becomes you not!
(*To* CYRIL *and* FLORIAN.) And you, young ladies, will you please to pray
King Hildebrand to set me free again?
Hang on his neck and gaze into his eyes,
He never could resist a pretty face!
Hil. You dog, you'll find though I wear woman's garb,
My sword is long and sharp!
Gama. Hush, pretty one!
Here's a virago! Here's a termagant!
If length and sharpness go for anything,
You'll want no sword while you can wag your tongue!
Cyril. What need to waste your words on such as he?
He's old and crippled.
Gama. Ay, but I've three sons,
Fine fellows, young, and muscular, and brave,

They're well worth talking to! Come, what d'ye say?
Arac. Ay, pretty ones, engage yourselves with us,
If three rude warriors affright you not!
Hil. Old as you are I'd wring your shrivelled neck
If you were not the Princess Ida's father.
Gama. If I were not the Princess Ida's father,
And so had not her brothers for my sons,
No doubt you'd wring my neck—in safety too!
Come, come, Hilarion, begin, begin!
Give them no quarter—they will give you none.
You've this advantage over warriors
Who kill their country's enemies for pay—
You know what you are fighting for—look there!
[*Pointing to* Ladies *on the battlements.*

SONG.—ARAC.

This helmet, I suppose,
Was meant to ward off blows,
It's very hot,
And weighs a lot,
As many a guardsman knows,
So off that helmet goes.

The Three Knights. Yes, yes,
So off that helmet goes!
[*Giving their helmets to attendants.*

Arac. This tight-fitting cuirass
Is but a useless mass,
It's made of steel,
And weighs a deal,
A man is but an ass
Who fights in a cuirass,
So off goes that cuirass.

All Three. Yes, yes,
So off goes that cuirass! [*Removing cuirasses.*

Arac. These brassets, truth to tell,
May look uncommon well,
But in a fight
They're much to tight,
They're like a lobster shell!

All Three. Yes, yes,
They're like a lobster shell.
[*Removing their brassets.*

Arac. These things I treat the same, [*Indicating leg pieces.*
(I quite forget their name)
They turn one's legs
To cribbage pegs—

Their aid I thus disclaim,
Though I forget their name.

All Three. Yes, yes,
Though we forget their name,
Their aid we thus disclaim!

[*They remove their leg pieces and wear close fitting shape suits.*

[*Desperate fight between the three* Princes *and the three* Knights *during which the* Ladies *on the battlements and the* Soldiers *on the stage sing the following chorus—*

This is our duty plain towards
Our Princess all immaculate
We ought to bless her brothers' swords
And piously ejaculate:
Oh, Hungary!
Oh, Hungary!
Oh, doughty sons of Hungary!
May all success
Attend and bless
Your warlike ironmongery!

[*By this time,* ARAC, GURON, *and* SCYNTHIUS *are on the ground, wounded*—HILARION, CYRIL *and* FLORIAN *stand over them.*

Prin. (*entering through gate and followed by Ladies.*)
Hold! stay your hands!—we yield ourselves to you!
Ladies, my brothers all lie bleeding there!
Bind up their wounds—but look the other way.
(*Coming down.*) Is this the end? (*Bitterly to* LADY BLANCHE.) How say you, Lady Blanche—
Can I with dignity my post resign?
And if I do, will you then take my place?
Bla. To answer this, it's meet that we consult
The great Potential Mysteries; I mean
The five Subjunctive Possibilities—
The May, the Might, the Would, the Could, the Should.
Can you resign? The prince May claim you; if
He Might, you Could—and if you Should, I Would!
Prin. I thought as much! Then, to my Fate I yield—
So ends my cherished scheme! Oh, I had hoped
To band all women with my maiden throng,
And make them all abjure tyrannic Man!
Hild. A noble aim!
Prin. You ridicule it now;
But if I carried out this glorious scheme,

At my exalted name Posterity
Would bow in gratitude!
Hild. But pray reflect—
If you enlist all women in your cause,
And make them all abjure tyrannic Man,
The obvious question then arises, "How
Is this Posterity to be provided?"
Prin. I never thought of that! My Lady Blanche,
How do you solve the riddle?
Bla. Don't ask me—
Abstract Philosophy won't answer it.
Take him—he is your Shall. Give in to Fate!
Prin. And you desert me. I alone am staunch!
Hild. Madam, you placed your trust in Woman—well,
Woman has failed you utterly—try Man,
Give him one chance, it's only fair—besides,
Women are far too precious, too divine
To try unproven theories upon.
Experiments, the proverb says, are made
On humble subjects—try our grosser clay,
And mould it as you will!
Cyr. Remember, too,
Dear Madam, if at any time you feel,
A-weary of the Prince, you can return
To Castle Adamant, and rule your girls
As heretofore, you know.
Prin. And shall I find
The Lady Psyche here?
Psy. If Cyril, ma'am,
Does not behave himself, I think you will.
Prin. And you, Melissa, shall I find *you* here?
Mel. Madam, however Florian turns out,
Unhesitatingly I answer, No!
Gama. Consider this, my love, if your mamma
Had looked on matters from your point of view
(I wish she had), why where would you have been?
Bla. There's an unbounded field of speculation,
On which I could discourse for hours!
Prin. No doubt!
We will not trouble you. Hilarion,
I have been wrong—I see my error now.
Take me, Hilarion—"We will walk the world
Yoked in all exercise of noble end!
And so through those dark gates across the wild
That no man knows! Indeed, I love thee—Come!"

FINALE.

Princess. With joy abiding,
Together gliding
Through life's variety
In sweet society,
And thus enthroning
The love I'm owning,
On this atoning
I will rely!

Chorus. It were profanity
For poor humanity
To treat as vanity
The sway of Love,
In no locality
Or principality
Is our mortality
Its sway above!

Hilarion. When day is fading,
With serenading
And such frivolity
Of tender quality—
With scented showers
Of fairest flowers,
The happy hours
Will gaily fly!

Chor. It were profanity, etc.

CURTAIN.

THE MIKADO;

OR,

THE TOWN OF TITIPU

AN ENTIRELY NEW AND ORIGINAL JAPANESE OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

Produced at the Savoy Theatre, London, on Saturday, March 14th 1885, under the management of MR. R. D'OYLY CARTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Mikado of Japan	Mr. R. Temple
Nanki-Poo, *his Son, disguised as a wandering minstrel, and in love with* Yum-Yum	Mr. Durward Lely.
Ko-Ko, *Lord High Executioner of Titipu*	Mr. George Grossmith.
Pooh-Bah, *Lord High Everything Else*	Mr. Rutland Barrington.
Pish-Tush, *a Noble Lord*	Mr. Frederick Bovill.
Yum-Yum, Pitti-Sing, Peep-Bo — *Three Sisters—Wards of* Ko-Ko	Miss Leonora Braham, Miss Jessie Bond, Miss Sybil Grey.
Katisha, *an elderly Lady, in love with* Nanki-Poo	Miss Rosina Brandram.

Chorus of School Girls, Nobles, Guards, and Coolies.

ACT I.

COURTYARD OF KO-KO'S OFFICIAL RESIDENCE.

ACT II.

KO-KO'S GARDEN.

THE MIKADO;

OR,

THE TOWN OF TITIPU.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Courtyard of* KO-KO'S *Palace in Titipu. Japanese* Nobles *discovered standing and sitting in attitudes suggested by native drawings.*

CHORUS.

If you want to know who we are,
We are gentlemen of Japan:
On many a vase and jar—
On many a screen and fan,
We figure in lively paint:
Our attitudes queer and quaint—
You're wrong if you think it ain't.

If you think we are worked by strings,
Like a Japanese marionette,
You don't understand these things:
It is simply Court etiquette.
Perhaps you suppose this throng
Can't keep it up all day long?
If that's your idea, you're wrong.

Enter NANKI-POO *in great excitement. He carries a native guitar on his back, and a bundle of ballads in his hand.*

RECITATIVE.—NANKI-POO.

Gentlemen, I pray you tell me,
Where a lovely maiden dwelleth,
Named Yum-Yum, the ward of Ko Ko,
In pity speak—oh, speak, I pray you!

A Noble. Why, who are you who ask this question?
Nank. Come, gather round me, and I'll tell you.

SONG.—NANKI-POO.

A wandering minstrel I—
A thing of shreds and patches,
Of ballads, songs, and snatches,
A dreamy lullaby!

My catalogue is long,
Through every passion ranging,
And to your humours changing
I tune my supple song!

Are you in sentimental mood?
I'll sigh with you,
Oh, willow, willow!
On maiden's coldness do you brood?
I'll do so too—
Oh, willow, willow!
I'll charm your willing ears
With songs of lover's fears,
While sympathetic tears
My cheeks bedew—
Oh, willow, willow!

But if patriotic sentiment is wanted,
I've patriotic ballads cut and dried;
For where'er our country's banner may be planted
All other local banners are defied!
Our warriors, in serried ranks assembled,
Never quail—or they conceal it if they do—
And I shouldn't be surprised if nations trembled
Before the mighty troops of Titipu!

And if you call for a song of the sea,
We'll heave the capstan round,
With a yeo heave ho, for the wind is free,
Her anchor's a-trip and her helm's a-lee,
Hurrah for the homeward bound!
Yeo-ho—heave ho—
Hurrah for the homeward bound!

To lay aloft in a howling breeze
May tickle a landsman's taste,
But the happiest hours a sailor sees
Is when he's down
At an inland town,
With his Nancy on his knees, yeo ho!
And his arm around her waist!

Then man the capstan—off we go,
As the fiddler swings us round,
With a yeo heave ho,
And a rumbelow.
Hurrah for the homeward bound!

A wandering minstrel I, etc.

Enter PISH-TUSH.

Pish. And what may be your business with Yum-Yum?

Nank. I'll tell you. A year ago I was a member of the Titipu town band. It was my duty to take the cap round for contributions. While discharging this delicate office, I saw Yum-Yum. We loved each other at once, but she was betrothed to her guardian, Ko-Ko, a cheap tailor, and I saw that my suit was hopeless. Overwhelmed with despair, I quitted the town. Judge of my delight when I heard, a month ago, that Ko-Ko had been condemned to death for flirting! I hurried back at once, in the hope of finding Yum-Yum at liberty to listen to my protestations.

Pish. It is true that Ko-Ko was condemned to death for flirting; but he was reprieved at the last moment, and raised to the exalted rank of Lord High Executioner under the following remarkable circumstances:—

SONG.—PISH-TUSH.

Our great Mikado, virtuous man,
When he to rule our land began,
Resolved to try
A plan whereby
Young men might best be steadied.
So he decreed, in words succinct,
That all who flirted, leered, or winked
(Unless connubially linked),
Should forthwith be beheaded.
And I expect you'll all agree
That he was right to so decree.
And I am right,
And you are right,
And all is right as right can be!

Chorus. And I expect, etc.

This stern decree, you'll understand,
Caused great dismay throughout the land;
For young and old
And shy and bold
Were equally affected.
The youth who winked a roving eye,
Or breathed a non-connubial sigh,
Was thereupon condemned to die—
He usually objected.

And you'll allow, as I expect,
That he was right to so object.
And I am right,
And you are right,
And everything is quite correct!

Chorus. And you'll allow, as I expect, etc.

And so we straight let out on bail
A convict from the county jail,
Whose head was next,
On some pretext,
Condemnëd to be mown off,
And made *him* Headsman, for we said,
"Who's next to be decapited
Cannot cut off another's head
Until he's cut his own off."

And we are right, I think you'll say,
To argue in this kind of way,
And I am right,
And you are right,
And all is right—too-loorul-lay!

Chorus. And they were right, etc. [*Exeunt* CHORUS.

Enter POOH-BAH.

Nank. Ko-Ko, the cheap tailor, Lord High Executioner of Titipu! Why, that's the highest rank a citizen can attain!

Pooh. It is. Our logical Mikado, seeing no moral difference between the dignified judge, who condemns a criminal to die, and the industrious mechanic who carries out the sentence, has rolled the two offices into one, and every judge is now his own executioner.

Nank. But how good of you (for I see that you are a nobleman of the highest rank) to condescend to tell all this to me, a mere strolling minstrel!

Pooh. Don't mention it. I am, in point of fact, a particularly haughty and exclusive person, of pre-Adamite ancestral descent. You will understand this when I tell you that I can trace my ancestry back to a protoplasmal primordial atomic globule. Consequently, my family pride is something inconceivable. I can't help it. I was born sneering. But I struggle hard to overcome this defect. I mortify my pride continually. When all the great officers of State resigned in a body, because they were too proud to serve under an ex-tailor, did I not unhesitatingly accept all their posts at once?

Pish. And the salaries attached to them? You did.

Pooh. It is consequently my degrading duty to serve this upstart as First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Chief Justice, Commander-in-Chief, Lord High Admiral, Master of the Buckhounds, Groom of the Back Stairs, Archbishop of Titipu, and Lord Mayor, both acting and elect, all rolled into one. And at a salary! A Pooh-Bah paid for his services! I a salaried minion! But I do it! It revolts me, but I do it.

Nank. And it does you credit.

Pooh. But I don't stop at that. I go and dine with middle-class people on reasonable terms. I dance at cheap suburban parties for a moderate fee. I accept refreshment at any hands, however lowly. I also retail State secrets at a very low figure. For instance, any further information about Yum-Yum would come under the head of a State secret. (NANKI-POO *takes the hint, and gives him money.*) (*Aside.*) Another insult, and, I think, a light one!

SONG.—POOH-BAH.

Young man, despair,
Likewise go to,
Yum-Yum the fair
You must not woo.
It will not do:
I'm sorry for you,
You very imperfect ablutioner!
This very day
From school Yum-Yum
Will wend her way,
And homeward come
With beat of drum,
And a rum-tum-tum,
To wed the Lord High Executioner!
And the brass will crash,
And the trumpets bray,
And they'll cut a dash
On their wedding-day.
From what I say, you may infer
It's as good as a play for him and her
She'll toddle away, as all aver,
With the Lord High Executioner!

It's a hopeless case
As you may see,
And in your place
Away I'd flee;
But don't blame me—
I'm sorry to be
Of your pleasure a diminutioner.
They'll vow their pact
Extremely soon,
In point of fact
This afternoon
Her honeymoon,
With that buffoon,
At seven, commences, so *you* shun her!

All. The brass will crash, etc.

RECITATIVE.

Nank. And have I journeyed for a month, or nearly,
To learn that Yum-Yum, whom I love so dearly,
This day to Ko-Ko is to be united!

Pooh. The fact appears to be as you've recited:
But here he comes, equipped as suits his station;
He'll give you any further information.

Enter Ko-Ko, *attended.*

CHORUS.

Behold the Lord High Executioner!
A personage of noble rank and title—
A dignified and potent officer,
Whose functions are particularly vital.
Defer, defer,
To the noble Lord High Executioner!

SOLO.—KO-KO.

Taken from the county jail
By a set of curious chances;
Liberated then on bail,
On my own recognizances;
Wafted by a favouring gale
As one sometimes is in trances
To a height that few can scale,
Save by long and weary dances;
Surely, never had a male
Under such like circumstances
So adventurous a tale,
Which may rank with most romances.

CHORUS.

Behold the Lord High Executioner, etc.

Ko. Gentlemen, I'm much touched by this reception. I can only trust that by strict attention to duty I shall ensure a continuance of those favours which it will ever be my study to deserve. Gentlemen, I expect my three beautiful wards, Yum-Yum, Peep-Bo, and Pitti-Sing, in a few minutes. If you will kindly receive them with a show of abject deference, I shall feel obliged to you. I know how painful it must be to noblemen of your rank to have to humiliate yourselves before a person of my antecedents, but discipline must be observed. (Chorus *bow and exeunt.*) Pooh-Bah, it seems that the festivities in connection with my approaching marriage must last a week. I should like to do it handsomely, and I want to consult you as to the amount I ought to spend upon them.

Pooh. Certainly. In which of my capacities? As First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Chamberlain, Attorney-General, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Privy Purse, or Private Secretary?

Ko. Suppose we say as Private Secretary.

Pooh. Speaking as your Private Secretary, I should say that, as the city will have to pay for it, don't stint yourself, do it well.

Ko. Exactly—as the city will have to pay for it. That is your advice.

Pooh. As Private Secretary. Of course you will understand that, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I am bound to see that due economy is observed.

Ko. Oh. But you said just now "Don't stint yourself, do it well."

Pooh. As Private Secretary.

Ko. And now you say that due economy must be observed.

Pooh. As Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Ko. I see. Come over here, where the Chancellor can't hear us. (*They cross stage.*) Now, as my Solicitor, how do you advise me to deal with this difficulty?

Pooh. Oh, as your Solicitor, I should have no hesitation in saying, "Chance it——"

Ko. Thank you. (*Shaking his hand.*) I will.

Pooh. If it were not that, as Lord Chief Justice, I am bound to see that the law isn't violated.

Ko. I see. Come over here where the Chief Justice can't hear us. (*They cross the stage.*) Now, then, as First Lord of the Treasury?

Pooh. Of course, as First Lord of the Treasury, I could propose a special vote that would cover all expenses, if it were not that, as leader of the Opposition, it would be my duty to resist it, tooth and nail. Or, as Paymaster-General, I could so cook the accounts, that as Lord High Auditor I should never discover the fraud. But then, as Archbishop of Titipu, it would be my duty to denounce my dishonesty and give myself into my own custody as First Commissioner of Police.

Ko. That's extremely awkward.

Pooh. I don't say that all these people couldn't be squared; but it is right to tell you that I shouldn't be sufficiently degraded in my own estimation unless I was insulted with a very considerable bribe.

Ko. The matter shall have my careful consideration. But my bride and her sisters approach, and any little compliment on your part, such as an abject grovel in a characteristic Japanese attitude, would be esteemed a favour.

Enter procession of YUM-YUM'S *schoolfellows, heralding* YUM-YUM, PEEP-BO, *and* PITTI-SING.

CHORUS.

Comes a train of little ladies
From scholastic trammels free,
Each a little bit afraid is,
Wondering what the world can be!

Is it but a world of trouble—
Sadness set to song?
Is its beauty but a bubble
Bound to break ere long?

Are its palaces and pleasures
Fantasies that fade?
And the glory of its treasures
Shadow of a shade?

Schoolgirls we, eighteen and under,
From scholastic trammels free,
And we wonder—how we wonder!—
What on earth the world can be!

TRIO.—YUM-YUM, PEEP-BO, AND PITTI-SING.

The Three. Three little maids from school are we,
Pert as a schoolgirl well can be,
Filled to the brim with girlish glee,
Three little maids from school

Yum-Yum. Everything is a source of fun. (*Chuckle*).
Peep-Bo. Nobody's safe, for we care for none! (*Chuckle*).
Pitti-Sing. Life is a joke that's just begun! (*Chuckle*).
The Three. Three little maids from school!

All (*dancing*). Three little maids who, all unwary,
Come from a ladies' seminary,
Freed from its genius tutelary—
The Three (*suddenly demure*). Three little maids from school!

Yum-Yum. One little maid is a bride, Yum-Yum—
Peep-Bo. Two little maids in attendance come—
Pitti-Sing. Three little maids is the total sum.
The Three. Three little maids from school!

Yum-Yum. From three little maids take one away—
Peep-Bo. Two little maids remain, and they—
Pitti-Sing. Won't have to wait very long, they say—
The Three. Three little maids from school!

All (*dancing*). Three little maids who, all unwary,
Come from a ladies' seminary.
Freed from its genius tutelary—
The Three (*suddenly demure*). Three little maids from school!

Ko. At last, my bride that is to be! (*About to embrace her.*)
Yum. You're not going to kiss me before all these people?
Ko. Well, that was the idea.
Yum. (*aside to* PEEP-BO). It seems odd, don't it?
Peep. It's rather peculiar.
Pitti. Oh, I expect it's all right. Must have a beginning, you know.
Yum. Well, of course I know nothing about these things; but I've no objection if it's usual.

Ko. Oh, it's quite usual, I think. Eh, Lord Chamberlain? (*Appealing to* POOH-BAH.)

Pooh. I have known it done. (KO-KO *embraces her.*)

Yum. That's over! (*Sees* NANKI-POO, *and rushes to him*). Why, that's never you? *The Three* Girls *rush to him and shake his hands, all speaking at once.*)

Yum. Oh, I'm so glad! I haven't seen you for ever so long, and I'm right at the top of the school, and I've got three prizes, and I've come home for good, and I'm not going back any more!

Peep. And have you got an engagement?—Yum-Yum's got one, but she don't like it, and she'd ever so much rather it was you. I've come home for good, and I'm not going back any more!

Pitti. Now tell us all the news, because you go about everywhere, and we've been at school; but, thank goodness, that's all over now, and we've come home for good, and we're not going back any more!

[*These three speeches are spoken together in one breath.*

Ko. I beg your pardon. Will you present me?

Yum. Oh, this is the musician who used——

Peep. Oh, this is the gentleman who used——

Pitti. Oh, it is only Nanki-Poo who used——

Ko. One at a time, if you please.

Yum. He's the gentleman who used to play so beautifully on the—on the——

Pitti. On the Marine Parade.

Yum. Yes, I think that was the name of the instrument.

Nank. Sir, I have the misfortune to love your ward, Yum-Yum—oh, I know I deserve your anger!

Ko. Anger! Not a bit, my boy. Why, I love her myself. Charming little girl, isn't she? Pretty eyes, nice hair. Taking little thing, altogether. Very glad to hear my opinion backed by a competent authority. Thank you very much. Good-bye, (*To* PISH-TUSH.) Take him away. (PISH-TUSH *removes him.*)

Pitti. (*who has been examining* POOH-BAH). I beg your pardon, but what is this? Customer come to try on?

Ko. That is a Tremendous Swell. (*She starts back in alarm.*)

Pooh. Go away, little girls. Can't talk to little girls like you. Go away, there's dears.

Ko. Allow me to present you, Pooh-Bah. These are my three wards. The one in the middle is my bride elect.

Pooh. What do you want me to do to them? Mind, I *will not* kiss them.

Ko. No, no, you shan't kiss them: a little bow—a mere nothing—you needn't mean it, you know.

Pooh. It goes against the grain. They are not young ladies, they are young persons.

Ko. Come, come, make an effort, there's a good nobleman.

Pooh (*aside to* Ko-Ko). Well, I shan't mean it. (*With a great effort.*) How de do, How de do, little girls! (*Aside.*) Oh, my protoplasmal ancestor!

Ko. That's very good. (Girls *indulge in suppressed laughter.*)

Pooh. I see nothing to laugh at. It is very painful to me to have to say "How de do, How de do, little girls," to young persons. I'm not in the habit of saying "How de do, How de do, little girls" to anybody under the rank of a Stockbroker.

Ko. (*aside to* Girls). Don't laugh at him—he's under treatment for it. (*Aside to* Pooh-Bah.) Never mind them, they don't understand the delicacy of your position.

Pooh. We know how delicate it is, don't we?

Ko. I should think we did! How a nobleman of your importance can do it at all is a thing I never can, never shall understand. [Ko-Ko *retires up and goes off.*

Quartette and Chorus.

Yum-Yum, Peep-Bo, and Pitti-Sing.

So please you, sir, we much regret
If we have failed in etiquette
Towards a man of rank so high—
We shall know better by-and-by.
But youth, of course, must have its fling,
So pardon us,
So pardon us,
And don't in girlhood's happy spring,
Be hard on us,
Be hard on us,
If we're disposed to dance and sing,
Tra la la, etc. (*Dancing.*)

Chorus of Girls. But youth of course, etc.

Pooh.

I think you ought to recollect
You cannot show too much respect
Towards the highly-titled few;
But nobody does, and why should you?
That youth at us should have its fling,
Is hard on us,
Is hard on us;
To our prerogative we cling—
So pardon us,
So pardon us,

If we decline to dance and sing—
Tra la la, etc. (*Dancing.*)

Chorus of Girls. But youth, of course, must have its fling, etc.

[*Exeunt all but* YUM-YUM.

Yum. How pitiable is the condition of a young and innocent child brought from the gloom of a ladies' academy into the full blown blaze of her own marriage ceremony; and with a man for whom I care nothing! True, he loves me; but everybody does that.

Enter NANKI-POO.

Nank. Yum-Yum, at last we are alone! I have sought you night and day for three weeks, in the belief that your guardian was beheaded, and I find that you are about to be married to him this afternoon!

Yum. Alas, yes!

Nank. But you do not love him?

Yum. Alas, no!

Nank. Modified rapture! But why do you not refuse him?

Yum. What good would that do? He's my guardian, and he wouldn't let me marry you!

Nank. But I would wait until you were of age!

Yum. You forget that in Japan girls do not arrive at years of discretion until they are fifty.

Nank. True; from seventeen to forty-nine are considered years of indiscretion.

Yum. Besides, a wandering minstrel, who plays a wind instrument outside tea-houses, is hardly a fitting husband for the ward of a Lord High Executioner.

Nank. But—— (*Aside.*) Shall I tell her? Yes! She will not betray me! (*Aloud.*) What if it should prove that, after all, I am no musician!

Yum. There! I was certain of it, directly I heard you play!

Nank. What if it should prove that I am no other than the son of his Majesty the Mikado?

Yum. The son of the Mikado! But why is your Highness disguised? And what has your Highness done? And will your Highness promise never to do it again?

Nank. Some years ago I had the misfortune to captivate Katisha, an elderly lady of my father's court. She misconstrued my customary affability into expressions of affection, and claimed me in marriage, under my father's law. My

father, the Lucius Junius Brutus of his race, ordered me to marry her within a week, or perish ignominiously on the scaffold. That night I fled his court, and, assuming the disguise of a Second Trombone, I joined the band in which you found me when I had the happiness of seeing you! (*Approaching her.*)

Yum. (*retreating*). If you please, I think your Highness had better not come too near. The laws against flirting are excessively severe.

Nank. But we are quite alone, and nobody can see us.

Yum. Still that don't make it right. To flirt is illegal, and we must obey the law.

Nank. Deuce take the law!

Yum. I wish it would, but it won't!

Nank. If it were not for that, how happy we might be!

Yum. Happy indeed!

Nank. If it were not for the law, we should now be sitting side by side, like that. (*Sits by her.*)

Yum. Instead of being obliged to sit half a mile off, like that. (*Crosses and sits at other side of stage.*)

Nank. We should be gazing into each other's eyes, like that. (*Approaching and gazing at her sentimentally.*)

Yum. Breathing vows of unutterable love—like that. (*Sighing and gazing lovingly at him.*)

Nank. With our arms round each other's waists like that. (*Embracing her.*)

Yum. Yes, if it wasn't for the law.

Nank. If it wasn't for the law.

Yum. As it is, of course, we couldn't do anything of the kind.

Nank. Not for worlds!

Yum. Being engaged to Ko-ko, you know!

Nank. Being engaged to Ko-ko!

Nank.
So, in spite of all temptation,
Such a theme I'll not discuss,
And on no consideration
Will I kiss you fondly thus—(*kissing her*)
Let me make it clear to you,
This, oh, this, oh, this, oh, this—(*kissing her*)
This is what I'll never do!

[*Exeunt in opposite directions*

Enter KO-KO.

Ko. (*looking after* YUM-YUM). There she goes! To think how entirely my future happiness is wrapped up in that little parcel! Really, it hardly seems worth while! Oh, matrimony!

Enter POOH-BAH *and* PISH-TUSH.

Now then, what is it? Can't you see I'm soliloquizing? You have interrupted an apostrophe, sir!

Pish. I am the bearer of a letter from His Majesty the Mikado

Ko. (*taking it from him reverentially*). A letter from the Mikado! What in the world can he have to say to me? (*Reads letter.*) Ah, here it is at last! I thought it would come! The Mikado is struck by the fact that no executions have taken place in Titipu for a year, and decrees that, unless somebody is beheaded within one month, the post of Lord High Executioner shall be abolished, and the city reduced to the rank of a village!

Pish. But that will involve us all in irretrievable ruin!

Ko. Yes. There's no help for it, I shall have to execute somebody. The only question is, who shall it be?

Pooh. Well, it seems unkind to say so, but as you're already under sentence of death for flirting, everything seems to point to *you*.

Ko. To me? What are you talking about? I can't execute myself, Recorder!

Pooh. Why not?

Ko. Why not? Because, in the first place, self-decapitation is an extremely difficult, not to say dangerous, thing to attempt; and, in the second, it's suicide, and suicide is a capital offence.

Pooh. That is so, no doubt.

Pish. We might reserve that point.

Pooh. True, it could be argued six months hence, before the full Court.

Ko. Besides, I don't see how a man *can* cut off his own head.

Pooh. A man might try.

Pish. Even if you only succeeded in cutting it half off, that would be something.

Pooh. It would be taken as an earnest of your desire to comply with the Imperial will.

Ko. No. Pardon me, but there I am adamant. As official Headsman, my reputation is at stake, and I can't consent to embark on a professional operation unless I see my way to a successful result.

Pooh. This professional conscientiousness is highly creditable to *you*, but it places us in a very awkward position.

Ko. My good sir, the awkwardness of your position is grace itself compared with that of a man engaged in the act of cutting off his own head.

Pish. I am afraid that, unless you can obtain a substitute——

Ko. A substitue? Oh, certainly—nothing easier. (*To* Pooh-Bah.) Pooh-Bah, I appoint you my substitute.

Pooh. I should like it above all things. Such an appointment would realize my fondest dreams. But no, at any sacrifice, I must set bounds to my insatiable ambition!

TRIO.

KO-KO.	POOH-BAH.	PISH-TUSH.
My brain it teems	I am so proud,	I heard one day,
With endless schemes,	If I allowed	A gentleman say
Both good and new	My family pride	That criminals who
For Titipu;	To be my guide,	Are cut in two
But if I flit,	I'd volunteer	Can hardly feel
The benefit	To quit this sphere	The fatal steel,
That I'd diffuse	Instead of you,	And so are slain
The town would lose!	In a minute or two,	Without much pain.
Now every man	But family pride	If this is true
To aid his clan	Must be denied,	It's jolly for you;
Should plot and plan	And set aside,	Your courage screw
As well as he can,	And mortified,	To bid us adieu,
And so,	And so,	And go
Although	Although	And show
I'm ready to go,	I wish to go,	Both friend and foe
Yet recollect	And greatly pine	How much you dare,
'Twere disrespect	To brightly shine,	I'm quite aware
Did I neglect	And take the line	It's your affair,
To thus effect	Of a hero fine,	Yet I declare
This aim direct,	With grief condign	I'd take your share,
So I object—	I must decline—	But I don't much care—
So I object—	I must decline—	I don't much care—
So I object—	I must decline—	I don't much care—

All. To sit in solemn silence in a dull, dark dock,
In a pestilential prison, with a life-long lock,
Awaiting the sensation of a short, sharp shock,
From a cheap and chippy chopper on a big black block!

[*Exeunt all but* KO-KO.

Ko. This is simply appalling! I, who allowed myself to be respited at the last moment, simply in order to benefit my native town, am now required to die within a month, and that by a man whom I have loaded with honours! Is this public gratitude? Is this——

Enter NANKI-POO, *with a rope in his hands.*

Go away, sir? How dare you? Am I never to be permitted to soliloquize?

Nank. Oh, go on—don't mind me.

Ko. What are you going to do with that rope?

Nank. I am about to terminate an unendurable existence.

Ko. Terminate your existence? Oh, nonsense! What for!

Nank. Because you are going to marry the girl I adore.

Ko. Nonsense, sir. I won't permit it. I am a humane man, and if you attempt anything of the kind I shall order your instant arrest. Come, sir, desist at once, or I summon my guard.

Nank. That's absurd. If you attempt to raise an alarm, I instantly perform the Happy Despatch with this dagger.

Ko. No, no, don't do that. This is horrible! (*Suddenly.*) Why, you cold-blooded scoundrel, are you aware that, in taking your life, you are committing a crime which—which—which is—— Oh! (*Struck by an idea.*)

Nank. What's the matter?

Ko. Is it *absolutely certain* that you are resolved to die?

Nank. Absolutely!

Ko. Will *nothing* shake your resolution?

Nank. Nothing.

Ko. Threats, entreaties, prayers—all useless?

Nank. All! My mind is made up.

Ko. Then, if you really mean what you say, and if you are absolutely resolved to die, and if nothing whatever will shake your determination—don't spoil yourself by committing suicide, but be beheaded handsomely at the hands of the Public Executioner!

Nank. I don't see how that would benefit me.

Ko. You don't? Observe: you'll have a month to live, and you'll live like a fighting-cock at my expense. When the day comes, there'll be a grand public ceremonial—you'll be the central figure—no one will attempt to deprive you of that distinction. There'll be a procession—bands—dead march—bells tolling—all the girls in tears—Yum-Yum distracted—then, when it's all over, general rejoicings, and a display of fireworks in the evening. *You* won't see them, but they'll be there all the same.

Nank. Do you think Yum-Yum would really be distracted at my death?

Ko. I am convinced of it. Bless you, she's the most tender-hearted little creature alive.

Nank. I should be sorry to cause her pain. Perhaps, after all, if I were to withdraw from Japan, and travel in Europe for a couple of years, I might contrive to forget her.

Ko. Oh, I don't think you could forget Yum-Yum so easily, and, after all, what is more miserable than a love-blighted life?

Nank. True.

Ko. Life without Yum-Yum—why, it seems absurd!

Nank. And yet there are a good many people in the world who have to endure it.

Ko. Poor devils, yes! You are quite right not to be of their number.

Nank. (*suddenly*). I *won't* be of their number!

Ko. Noble fellow!

Nank. I'll tell you how we'll manage it. Let me marry Yum-Yum to-morrow, and in a month you may behead me.

Ko. No, no. I draw the line at Yum-Yum.

Nank. Very good. If you can draw the line, so can I. (*Preparing rope.*)

Ko. Stop, stop—listen one moment—be reasonable. How can I consent to your marrying Yum-Yum, if I'm going to marry her myself?

Nank. My good friend, she'll be a widow in a month, and you can marry her then.

Ko. That's true, of course. I quite see that, but, dear me, my position during the next month will be most unpleasant—most unpleasant!

Nank. Not half so unpleasant as my position at the end of it.

Ko. But—dear me—well—I agree. After all, it's only putting off my wedding for a month. But you won't prejudice her against me, will you? You see, I've educated her to be my wife; she's been taught to regard me as a wise and good man. Now, I shouldn't like her views on that point disturbed.

Nank. Trust me, she shall never learn the truth from me.

FINALE.

Enter Chorus, POOH-BAH, *and* PISH-TUSH.

CHORUS.

With aspect stern
And gloomy stride,
We come to learn
How you decide.
Don't hesitate
Your choice to name,
A dreadful fate
You'll suffer all the same.

Pooh. To ask you what you mean to do we punctually appear.
Ko. Congratulate me, gentlemen, I've found a Volunteer!
All. The Japanese equivalent for Hear, Hear, Hear!
Ko. (*presenting him*). 'Tis Nanki-Pooh!
All. Hail, Nanki-Pooh!
Ko. I think he'll do?
All. Yes, yes, he'll do!
Ko. He yields his life if I'll Yum-Yum surrender;
Now, I adore that girl with passion tender,

And could not yield her with a ready will,
Or her allot,
If I did not
Adore myself with passion tenderer still!

All. Ah, yes!
He loves himself with passion tenderer still!

Ko. (*to* NANKI-POO.) Take her—she's yours!

Enter YUM-YUM, PEEP-BO, *and* PITTI-SING.

Nank. and Yum-Yum. Oh, rapture!

ENSEMBLE.

Yum-Yum and Nanki-Poo. The threatened cloud has passed away,
And brightly shines the dawning day;
What though the night may come too soon,
There's yet a month of afternoon!
Then let the throng
Our joy advance,
With laughing song,
And merry dance,
With joyous shout and ringing cheer,
Inaugurate our brief career!

Chorus. Then let the throng, etc.

Pitti-Sing. A day, a week, a month, a year—
Or be it far, or be it near,
Life's eventime comes much too soon,
You'll live at least a honeymoon!

All. Then let the throng, etc.

SOLO.—POOH-BAH.

As in three weeks you've got to die,
If Ko-Ko tells us true,
'Twere empty compliment to cry
Long life to Nanki-Poo!
But as you've got three weeks to live
As fellow citizen,
This toast with three times three we'll give
"Long life to you—till then!"

Chorus. May all good fortune prosper you,
May you have health and riches too,
May you succeed in all you do.
Long life to you—till then!

DANCE.

Enter KATISHA, *melodramatically.*

Kat. Your revels cease—assist me all of you!

Chorus. Why, who is this whose evil eyes
Rain blight on our festivities?

Kat. I claim my perjured lover, Nanki-Poo!
Oh, fool! to shun delights that never cloy!
Come back, oh, shallow fool! come back to joy!

Chorus. Go, leave thy deadly work undone;
Away, away! ill-favoured one!

Nank. (*aside to* YUM-YUM). Ah!
'Tis Katisha!
The maid of whom I told you. (*About to go.*)

Kat. (*detaining him*). No!
You shall not go,
These arms shall thus enfold you!

SONG.—KATISHA.

(*Addressing* NANKI-POO.) Oh fool, that fleest
My hallowed joys!
Oh blind, that seest
No equipoise!
Oh rash, that judgest
From half, the whole!
Oh base, that grudgest
Love's lightest dole!
Thy heart unbind,
Oh fool, oh blind!
Give me my place,
Oh rash, oh base!

Chorus. If she's thy bride, restore her place,
Oh fool, oh blind, oh rash, oh base!

Kat (*addressing* YUM-YUM). Pink cheek, that rulest
Where wisdom serves!
Bright eye, that foolest
Steel-tempered nerves;
Rose-lip, that scornest
Lore-laden years—
Sweet tongue, that warnest
Who rightly hears—
Thy doom is nigh,
Pink cheek, bright eye!
Thy knell is rung,
Rose-lip, sweet tongue.

Chorus. If true her tale, thy knell is rung,
Pink cheek, bright eye, rose-lip, sweet tongue!

Pitti-Sing. Away, nor prosecute your quest—
From our intention well expressed,
You cannot turn us!
The state of your connubial views
Towards the person you accuse
Does not concern us!
For he's going to marry Yum-Yum—

All. Yum-Yum!

Pitti. Your anger pray bury,
For all will be merry,
I think you had better succumb—

All. Cumb—cumb!

Pitti. And join our expressions of glee,
On this subject I pray you be dumb—

All. Dumb—dumb.

Pitti. You'll find there are many
Who'll wed for a penny—
The word for your guidance is, "Mum"—
All. Mum—mum!
Pitti. There's lots of good fish in the sea!
All. There's lots of good fish in the sea!
And you'll find there are many, etc.

SOLO.—KATISHA.

The hour of gladness
Is dead and gone;
In silent sadness
I live alone!
The hope I cherished
All lifeless lies,
And all has perished
Save love, which never dies!
Oh, faithless one, this insult you shall rue!
In vain for mercy on your knees you'll sue.
I'll tear the mask from you disguising!
Nank. (*aside*). Now comes the blow!
Kat. Prepare yourself for news surprising!
Nank. (*aside*). How foil my foe?
Kat. No minstrel he, despite bravado!
Yum. (*aside, struck by an idea*). Ha! ha! I know!
Kat. He is the son of your——

[NANKI-POO *and* YUM-YUM, *interrupting, sing Japanese words to drown her voice.*

O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!
O sa! bikkuri shakkuri to!
Kat. In vain you interrupt with this tornado:
He is the only son of your——
All. O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!
Kat. I'll spoil——
All. O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!
Kat. Your gay gambado!
He is the son——
All. O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!
Kat. Of your——
All. O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!

ENSEMBLE.

KATISHA.

Ye torrents roar!
Ye tempests howl!
Your wrath outpour
With angry growl!
Do ye your worst, my vengeance call
Shall rise triumphant over all!
Prepare for woe,
Ye haughty lords,
At once I go
Mikado-wards,

THE OTHERS.

We'll hear no more
Ill-omened owl,
To joy we soar,
Despite your scowl
The echoes of our festival
Shall rise triumphant over all!
Away you go,
Collect your hordes;
Proclaim your woe
In dismal chords;

And when he learns his son is found, We do not heed their dismal sound,
My wrongs with vengeance will be For joy reigns everywhere around!
crowned!

[KATISHA *rushes furiously up stage, clearing the crowd away right and left, finishing on steps at the back of stage.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—KO-KO's *Garden.* YUM-YUM *discovered seated at her bridal toilet, surrounded by* Maidens, *who are dressing her hair and painting her face and lips, as she judges of the effect in a mirror.*

CHORUS.

Braid the raven hair—
Weave the supple tress—
Deck the maiden fair
In her loveliness—
Paint the pretty face—
Dye the coral lip—
Emphasize the grace
Of her ladyship!
Art and nature, thus allied,
Go to make a pretty bride!

SOLO.—PITTI-SING.

Sit with downcast eye—
Let it brim with dew—
Try if you can cry—
We will do so, too.
When you're summoned, start,
Like a frightened roe—
Flutter, little heart,
Colour, come and go!
Modesty at marriage-tide
Well becomes a pretty bride!

CHORUS.

Braid the raven hair, etc. [*Exeunt* Chorus.

Yum. (*looking at herself in glass*). Yes, I am indeed beautiful! Sometimes I sit and wonder, in my artless Japanese way, why it is that I am so much more attractive than anybody else in the whole world? Can this be vanity? No! Nature is lovely and rejoices in her loveliness. I am a child of Nature, and take after my mother.

SONG.—YUM-YUM.

The sun, whose rays
Are all ablaze

With ever living glory,
Does not deny
His majesty—
He scorns to tell a story!
He don't exclaim,
"I blush for shame,
So kindly be indulgent."
But, fierce and bold,
In fiery gold,
He glories all effulgent!

I mean to rule the earth,
As he the sky—
We really know our worth,
The sun and I!

Observe his flame,
That placid dame,
The moon's Celestial Highness;
There's not a trace
Upon her face
Of diffidence or shyness:
She borrows light
That, through the night,
Mankind may all acclaim her!
And, truth to tell,
She lights up well,
So I, for one, don't blame her!

Ah, pray make no mistake,
We are not shy;
We're very wide awake,
The moon and I!

Yum. Yes, everything seems to smile upon me. I am to be married to-day to the man I love best, and I believe I am the very happiest girl in Japan!

Peep. The happiest girl indeed, for she is indeed to be envied who has attained happiness in all but perfection.

Yum. In "all but" perfection?

Peep. Well, dear, it can't be denied that the fact that your husband is to be beheaded in a month is, in its way, a drawback.

Pitti. I don't know about that. It all depends!

Peep. At all events, *he* will find it a drawback.

Pitti. Not necessarily. Bless you, it all depends!

Yum. (*in tears*). I think it very indelicate of you to refer to such a subject on such a day. If my married happiness is to be—to be——

Peep. Cut short.

Yum. Well, cut short—in a month, can't you let me forget it? (*Weeping.*)

Enter NANKI-POO *followed by* PISH-TUSH.

Nank. Yum-Yum in tears—and on her wedding morn!

Yum. (*sobbing*). They've been reminding me that in a month you're to be beheaded! (*Bursts into tears.*)

Pitti. Yes, we've been reminding her that you're to be beheaded. (*Bursts into tears.*)

Peep. It's quite true, you know, you *are* to be beheaded! (*Bursts into tears.*)

Nank. (*aside*). Humph! How some bridegrooms would be depressed by this sort of thing! (*Aloud.*) A month? Well, what's a month? Bah! These divisions of time are purely arbitrary. Who says twenty-four hours make a day?

Pitti. There's a popular impression to that effect.

Nank. Then we'll efface it. We'll call each second a minute—each minute an hour—each hour a day—and each day a year. At that rate we've about thirty years of married happiness before us!

Peep. And at that rate, this interview has already lasted four hours and three-quarters! [*Exit* PEEP-BO.

Yum. (*still sobbing*). Yes. How time flies when one is thoroughly enjoying one's self!

Nank. That's the way to look at it! Don't let's be downhearted! There's a silver lining to every cloud.

Yum. Certainly. Let's—let's be perfectly happy! (*Almost in tears.*)

Pish. By all means. Let's—let's thoroughly enjoy ourselves.

Pitti. It's—it's absurd to cry! (*Trying to force a laugh.*)

Yum. Quite ridiculous! (*Trying to laugh.*)

[*All break into a forced and melancholy laugh.*

QUARTETTE.

YUM-YUM, PITTI-SING, NANKI-POO, AND PISH-TUSH.

Brightly dawns our wedding-day;
Joyous hour, we give thee greeting!
Whither, whither art thou fleeting?
Fickle moment, prithee stay!
What though mortal joys be hollow?
Pleasures come, if sorrows follow:
Though the tocsin sound, ere long,
Ding dong! Ding dong!
Yet until the shadows fall
Over one and over all,
Sing a merry madrigal—
A madrigal!

Fal-la—fal-la! etc. (*Ending in tears.*)

Let us dry the ready tear,
Though the hours are surely creeping,
Little need for woeful weeping,
Till the sad sundown is near.
All must sip the cup of sorrow—
I to-day and thou to-morrow:
This the close of every song—
Ding dong! Ding dong!
What, though solemn shadows fall,
Sooner, later, over all?
Sing a merry madrigal—
A madrigal!

Fal-la—fal-la! etc. (*Ending in tears.*)

[*Exeunt* PITTI-SING *and* PISH-TUSH.

NANKI-POO *embraces* YUM-YUM. *Enter* KO-KO. NANKI-POO *releases* YUM-YUM.

Ko. Go on—don't mind me.

Nank. I'm afraid we're distressing you.

Ko. Never mind, I must get used to it. Only please do it by degrees. Begin by putting your arm round her waist. (NANKI-POO *does so.*) There; let me get used to that first.

Yum. Oh, wouldn't you like to retire? It must pain you to see us so affectionate together!

Ko. No, I must learn to bear it! Now oblige me by allowing her head to rest on your shoulder. (*He does so*—KO-KO *much affected.*) I am much obliged to you. Now—kiss her! (*He does so*—KO-KO *writhes with anguish.*) Thank you—it's simple torture!

Yum. Come, come, bear up. After all, it's only for a month.

Ko. No. It's no use deluding one's self with false hopes.

Nank. and Yum. (*together*). What do you mean?

Ko. (*to* YUM-YUM). My child—my poor child. (*Aside.*) How shall I break it to her? (*Aloud.*) My little bride that was to have been.

Yum. (*delighted*). *Was* to have been!

Ko. Yes; you never can be mine!

Yum. (*in ecstasy*). What!!!

Ko. I've just ascertained that, by the Mikado's law, when a married man is beheaded his wife is buried alive.

Nank. and Yum. (*together*). Buried alive!

Ko. Buried alive. It's a most unpleasant death.

Nank. But whom did you get that from?

Ko. Oh, from Pooh-Bah. He's my solicitor.

Yum. But he may be mistaken!

Ko. So I thought, so I consulted the Attorney-General, the

Lord Chief Justice, the Master of the Rolls, the Judge Ordinary, and the Lord Chancellor. They're all of the same opinion. Never knew such unanimity on a point of law in my life!

Nank. But, stop a bit! This law has never been put in force?

Ko. Not yet. You see, flirting is the only crime punishable with decapitation, and married men never flirt.

Nank. Of course they don't. I quite forgot that! Well, I suppose I may take it that my dream of happiness is at an end!

Yum. Darling, I don't want to appear selfish, and I love you with all my heart—I don't suppose I shall ever love anybody else half as much—but when I agreed to marry you, my own, I had no idea, pet, that I should have to be buried alive in a month!

Nank. Nor I! It's the very first I've heard of it!

Yum. It—it makes a difference, doesn't it?

Nank. It *does* make a difference, of course!

Yum. You see—burial alive—it's such a stuffy death! You see my difficulty, don't you?

Nank. Yes; and I see my own. If I insist on your carrying out your promise, I doom you to a hideous death; if I release you, you marry Ko-Ko at once!

TRIO.—YUM-YUM, NANKI-POO, AND KO-KO.

Yum.
Here's a how-de-do!
If I marry you,
When your time has come to perish,
Then the maiden whom you cherish
Must be slaughtered too!
Here's a how-de-do!

Nank.
Here's a pretty mess!
In a month, or less,
I must die without a wedding!
Let the bitter tears I'm shedding
Witness my distress,
Here's a pretty mess!

Ko.
Here's a state of things!
To her life she clings!
Matrimonial devotion
Doesn't seem to suit her notion—
Burial it brings!
Here's a state of things!

ENSEMBLE.

YUM-YUM AND NANKI-POO.
With a passion that's intense
I worship and adore,

KO-KO.
With a passion that's intense
You worship and adore,

But the laws of common sense
We oughtn't to ignore.
If what he says is true,
It is death to marry you!
Here's a pretty state of things!
Here's a pretty how-de-do!

But the laws of common sense
You oughtn't to ignore.
If what I say is true,
It is death to marry you!
Here's a pretty state of things!
Here's a pretty how-de-do!

[*Exit* YUM-YUM.

Ko. (*going up to* NANKI-POO). My poor boy, I'm really very sorry for you.

Nank. Thanks, old fellow. I'm sure you are.

Ko. You see I'm quite helpless.

Nank. I quite see that.

Ko. I can't conceive anything more distressing than to have one's marriage broken off at the last moment. But you shan't be disappointed of a wedding—you shall come to mine.

Nank. It's awfully kind of you, but that's impossible.

Ko. Why so?

Nank. To-day I die.

Ko. What do you mean?

Nank. I can't live without Yum-Yum. This afternoon I perform the Happy Despatch.

Ko. No, no—pardon me—I can't allow that.

Nank. Why not?

Ko. Why, hang it all, you're under contract to die by the hand of the Public Executioner in a month's time! If you kill yourself, what's to become of me? Why, I shall have to be executed in your place!

Nank. It would certainly seem so!

Enter POOH-BAH.

Ko. Now then, Lord Mayor, what is it?

Pooh. The Mikado and his suite are approaching the city, and will be here in ten minutes.

Ko. The Mikado! He's coming to see whether his orders have been carried out! (*To* NANKI-POO.) Now, look here, you know—this is getting serious—a bargain's a bargain, and you really mustn't frustrate the ends of justice by committing suicide. As a man of honour and a gentleman, you are bound to die ignominiously by the hands of the Public Executioner.

Nank. Very well, then—behead me.

Ko. What, now?

Nank. Certainly; at once.

Ko. My good sir, I don't go about prepared to execute gentlemen at a moment's notice. Why, I never even killed a blue-bottle!

Pooh. Still, as Lord High Executioner——

Ko. My good sir, as Lord High Executioner I've got to behead him in a month. I'm not ready yet. I don't know how it's done. I'm going to take lessons. I mean to begin with a guinea-pig, and work my way through the animal kingdom till I come to a second trombone. Why, you don't suppose that, as a humane man, I'd have accepted the post of Lord High Executioner if I hadn't thought the duties were purely nominal? I *can't* kill you—I can't kill anything! (*Weeps.*)

Nank. Come, my poor fellow, your feelings do you credit; but you must nerve yourself to this—you must, indeed. We all have unpleasant duties to discharge at times; and when these duties present themselves we must nerve ourselves to an effort. Come, now—after all, what is it? If I don't mind, why should you? Remember, sooner or later it must be done.

Ko. (*springing up suddenly*). *Must it?* I'm not so sure about that!

Nank. What do you mean?

Ko. Why should I kill you when making an affidavit that you've been executed will do just as well? Here are plenty of witnesses—the Lord Chief Justice, and Lord High Admiral, Commander-in-Chief, Secretary of State for the Home Department, First Lord of the Treasury, and Chief Commissioner of Police. They'll all swear to it—won't you? (*To* Pooh-Bah.)

Pooh. Am I to understand that all of us high Officers of State are required to perjure ourselves to ensure your safety?

Ko. Why not? You'll be grossly insulted as usual.

Pooh. Will the insult be cash down, or at a date?

Ko. It will be a ready-money transaction.

Pooh. (*aside*). Well, it will be a useful discipline. (*Aloud.*, Very good. Choose your fiction, and I'll endorse it! (*Aside.*) Ha! ha! Family Pride, how do you like *that*, my buck?

Nank. But I tell you that life without Yum-Yum——

Ko. Oh, Yum-Yum, Yum-Yum! Bother Yum-Yum! Here, Commissionaire (*to* Pooh-Bah), go and fetch Yum-Yum. (*Exit* Pooh-Bah.) Take Yum-Yum and marry Yum-Yum, only go away and never come back again.

Enter Pooh-Bah *with* Yum-Yum *and* Pitti-Sing.

Here she is. Yum-Yum, are you particularly busy?

Yum. Not particularly.

Ko. You've five minutes to spare?

Yum. Yes.

Ko. Then go along with his Grace the Archbishop of Titipu; he'll marry you at once.

Yum. But if I'm to be buried alive?

Ko. Now don't ask any questions, but do as I tell you, and Nanki-Poo will explain all.

Nank. But one moment——

Ko. Not for worlds. Here comes the Mikado, no doubt to ascertain whether I've obeyed his decree, and if he finds you alive, I shall have the greatest difficulty in persuading him that I've beheaded you. (*Exeunt* NANKI-POO *and* YUM-YUM, *followed by* POOH-BAH.) Close thing that, for here he comes!

March. *Enter procession, heralding* MIKADO, *with* KATISHA.

CHORUS.

"*March of the Mikado's troops.*"

Miya sama, miya sama,
On ma no mayé ni
Pira-Pira suru no wa
Nan gia na
Toke tonyaré tonyaré na!

DUET.—MIKADO AND KATISHA.

Mikado. From every kind of man
Obedience I expect;
I'm the Emperor of Japan.

Kat. And I'm his daughter-in-law elect!
He'll marry his son
(He has only got one)
To his daughter-in-law elect.

Mik. My morals have been declared
Particularly correct;

Kat. But they're nothing at all, compared
With those of his daughter-in-law elect!
Bow! Bow!
To his daughter-in-law elect!

All. Bow! Bow!
To his daughter-in-law elect.

Mik. In a fatherly kind of way
I govern each tribe and sect,
All cheerfully own my sway—

Kat. Except his daughter-in-law elect!
As tough as a bone,
With a will of her own,
Is his daughter-in-law elect!

Mik. My nature is love and light—
My freedom from all defect—

Kat. Is insignificant quite,
Compared with his daughter-in-law elect!
Bow! Bow!
To his daughter-in-law elect!

All Bow! Bow!
To his daughter-in-law elect.

SONG.—MIKADO.

A more humane Mikado never
Did in Japan exist,
To nobody second,
I'm certainly reckoned
A true philanthropist.
It is my very humane endeavour
To make, to some extent,
Each evil liver
A running river
Of harmless merriment.

My object all sublime
I shall achieve in time—
To let the punishment fit the crime—
The punishment fit the crime;
And make each prisoner pent
Unwillingly represent
A source of innocent merriment,
Of innocent merriment!

All prosy dull society sinners,
Who chatter and bleat and bore,
Are sent to hear sermons
From mystical Germans
Who preach from ten to four.
The amateur tenor, whose vocal villainies
All desire to shirk,
Shall, during off-hours,
Exhibit his powers
To Madame Tussaud's waxwork.

My object all sublime, etc.

The lady who dies a chemical yellow,
Or stains her grey hair puce,
Or pinches her figger,
Is blacked like a nigger
With permanent walnut juice.
The idiot who, in railway carriages,
Scribbles on window panes,
We only suffer
To ride on a buffer
In parliamentary trains.

My object all sublime, etc.

The advertising quack who wearies
With tales of countless cures,
His teeth, I've enacted,
Shall all be extracted
By terrified amateurs.
The music-hall singer attends a series

Of masses and fugues and "ops"
By Bach, interwoven
With Spohr and Beethoven,
At classical Monday Pops.

My object all sublime, etc.

The billiard sharp whom any one catches,
His doom's extremely hard—
He's made to dwell—
In a dungeon cell
On a spot that's always barred.
And there he plays extravagant matches
In fitless finger-stalls
On a cloth untrue
With a twisted cue,
And elliptical billiard balls!

My object all sublime, etc.

Enter POOH-BAH, *who hands a paper to* KO-KO.

Ko. I am honoured in being permitted to welcome your Majesty. I guess the object of your Majesty's visit—your wishes have been attended to. The execution has taken place.

Mik. Oh, you've had an execution, have you?

Ko. Yes. The Coroner has just handed me his certificate.

Pooh. I am the Coroner. (KO-KO *hands certificate to* MIKADO.)

Mik. (*reads*). "At Titipu, in the presence of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice, Attorney-General, Secretary of State for the Home Department, Lord Mayor, and Groom of the Second Floor Front."

Pooh. They were all present, your Majesty. I counted them myself.

Mik. Very good house. I wish I'd been in time for the performance.

Ko. A tough fellow he was, too—a man of gigantic strength. His struggles were terrific. It was really a remarkable scene.

TRIO.—KO-KO, PITTI-SING, AND POOH-BAH.

Ko. The criminal cried, as he dropped him down,
In a state of wild alarm—
With a frightful, frantic, fearful frown
I bared my big right arm.
I seized him by his little pig-tail,
And on his knees fell he,
As he squirmed and struggled
And gurgled and guggled,
I drew my snickersnee!
Oh, never shall I
Forget the cry,

Or the shriek that shriekèd he,
As I gnashed my teeth,
When from its sheath
I drew my snickersnee!

CHORUS.

We know him well,
He cannot tell
Untrue or groundless tales—
He always tries
To utter lies,
And every time he fails.

Pitti-Sing. He shivered and shook as he gave the sign
For the stroke he didn't deserve;
When all of a sudden his eye met mine,
And it seemed to brace his nerve,
For he nodded his head and kissed his hand,
And he whistled an air, did he,
As the sabre true
Cut cleanly through
His cervical vertebræ!
When a man's afraid,
A beautiful maid
Is a cheering sight to see,
And it's oh, I'm glad
That moment sad
Was soothed by sight of me!

CHORUS.

Her terrible tale
You can't assail,
With truth it quite agrees;
Her taste exact
For faultless fact
Amounts to a disease.

Pooh. Now though you'd have said that head was dead
(For its owner dead was he),
It stood on its neck with a smile well bred,
And bowed three times to me!

It was none of your impudent off-hand nods,
But as humble as could be;
For it clearly knew
The deference due
To a man of pedigree!
And it's oh, I vow,
This deathly bow
Was a touching sight to see;
Though trunkless, yet
It couldn't forget
The deference due to me!

CHORUS.
This haughty youth
He speaks the truth
Whenever he finds it pays,
And in this case
It all took place
Exactly as he says! [*Exeunt* Chorus.

Mik. All this is very interesting, and I should like to have seen it. But we came about a totally different matter. A year ago my son, the heir to the throne of Japan, bolted from our imperial court.

Ko. Indeed? Had he any reason to be dissatisfied with his position?

Kat. None whatever. On the contrary, I was going to marry him—yet he fled!

Pooh. I am surprised that he should have fled from one so lovely!

Kat. That's not true. You hold that I am not beautiful because my face is plain. But you know nothing; you are still unenlightened. Learn, then, that it is not in the face alone that beauty is to be sought. But I have a left shoulder-blade that is a miracle of loveliness. People come miles to see it. My right elbow has a fascination that few can resist. It is on view Tuesdays and Fridays, on presentation of visiting-card. As for my circulation, it is the largest in the world. Observe this ear.

Ko. Large.

Kat. Large? Enormous! But think of its delicate internal mechanism. It is fraught with beauty! As for this tooth, it almost stands alone. Many have tried to draw it, but in vain.

Ko. And yet he fled!

Mik. And is now masquerading in this town, disguised as a second trombone.

Ko., Pooh., and Pitti. (*together*). A second trombone!

Mik. Yes; would it be troubling you too much if I asked you to produce him? He goes by the name of Nanki-Poo.

Ko. Oh no; not at all—only——

Mik. Yes?

Ko. It's rather awkward; but, in point of fact, he's gone abroad!

Mik. Gone abroad? His address!

Ko. Knightsbridge!

Kat. (*who is reading certificate of death*). Ha!

Mik. What's the matter?

Kat. See here—his name—Nanki-Poo—beheaded this morn

ing! Oh, where shall I find another! Where shall I find another! [KO-KO, POOH-BAH, *and* PITTI-SING *fall on their knees.*

Mik. (*looking at paper*). Dear, dear, dear; this is very tiresome. (*To* KO-KO.) My poor fellow, in your anxiety to carry out my wishes, you have beheaded the heir to the throne of Japan!

Together. { *Ko.* But I assure you we had no idea—
Pooh. But, indeed, we didn't know—
Pitti. We really hadn't the least notion—

Mik. Of course you hadn't. How could you? Come, come, my good fellow, don't distress yourself—it was no fault of yours If a man of exalted rank chooses to disguise himself as a second trombone, he must take the consequences. It really distresses me to see you take on so. I've no doubt he thoroughly deserved all he got. (*They rise.*)

Ko. We are infinitely obliged to your Majesty.

Mik. Obliged? Not a bit. Don't mention it. How *could* you tell?

Pooh. No, of course we couldn't know that he was the Heir Apparent.

Pitti. It wasn't written on his forehead, you know.

Ko. It might have been on his pocket-handkerchief, but Japanese don't use pocket-handkerchiefs! Ha! ha! ha!

Mik. Ha! ha! ha! (*To* KAT.) I forget the punishment for compassing the death of the Heir Apparent.

Ko., Pooh., and Pitti. (*together*). Punishment! (*They drop down on their knees again.*)

Mik. Yes. Something lingering, with boiling oil in it, I fancy. Something of that sort. I think boiling oil occurs in it, but I'm not sure. I know it's something humorous, but lingering, with either boiling oil or melted lead. Come, come, don't fret —I'm not a bit angry.

Ko. (*in abject terror*). If your Majesty will accept our assurance, we had no idea——

Mik. Of course you hadn't. That's the pathetic part of it. Unfortunately the fool of an Act says "compassing the death of the Heir Apparent." There's not a word about a mistake, or not knowing, or having no notion. There should be, of course, but there isn't. That's the slovenly way in which these Acts are drawn. However, cheer up, it'll be all right. I'll have it altered next session.

Ko. What's the good of that?

Mik. Now, let's see—will after luncheon suit you? Can you wait till then?

Ko., Pitti. and Pooh. Oh yes—we can wait till then!

Mik. Then we'll make it after luncheon. I'm really very sorry for you all, but it's an unjust world, and virtue is triumphant only in theatrical performances.

GLEE.

MIKADO, KATISHA, KO-KO. POOH-BAH, AND PITTI-SING.

Mik. and Kat. See how the Fates their gifts allot,
For A is happy—B is not.
Yet B is worthy, I dare say,
Of more prosperity than A!
Ko., Pooh., and Pitti. *Is* B more worthy?
Mik. and Kat. I should say
He's worth a great deal more than A.

ENSEMBLE.

Yet A is happy!
Oh, so happy!
Laughing, Ha! ha!
Chaffing, Ha! ha!
Nectar quaffing, Ha! ha! ha! ha!
Ever joyous ever gay,
Happy, undeserving A!

Ko., Pooh., and Pitti. If I were fortune—which I'm not—
B should enjoy A's happy lot,
And A should die in miserie,
That is, assuming I am B.
Mik. and Kat. But *should* A perish?
Ko., Pooh., and Pitti. That should he,
(Of course assuming I am B).

B should be happy!
Oh, so happy!
Laughing, Ha! ha!
Chaffing, Ha! ha!
Nectar quaffing, Ha! ha! ha! ha!
But condemned to die is he,
Wretched, meritorious B!

[*Exeunt* MIKADO *and* KATISHA.

Ko. Well! a nice mess you've got us into, with your nodding head and the deference due to a man of pedigree!

Pooh. Merely corroborative detail, intended to give artistic verisimilitude to a bald and unconvincing narrative.

Pitti. Corroborative detail indeed! Corroborative fiddlestick!

Ko. And you're just as bad as he is, with your cock-and-a-bull stories about catching his eye, and his whistling an air. But that's so like you! You must put in your oar!

Pooh. But how about your big right arm?

Pitti. Yes, and your snickersnee!

Ko. Well, well, never mind that now. There's only one thing to be done. Nanki-Poo hasn't started yet—he must come to life again at once.

Enter NANKI-POO *and* YUM-YUM *prepare for journey.*

Here he comes. Here, Nanki-Poo, I've good news for you—you're reprieved.

Nank. Oh, but it's too late. I'm a dead man, and I'm off for my honeymoon.

Ko. Nonsense. A terrible thing has just happened. It seems you're the son of the Mikado.

Nank. Yes; but that happened some time ago.

Ko. Is this a time for airy persiflage? Your father is here, and with Katisha.

Nank. My father! And with Katisha!

Ko. Yes; he wants you particularly.

Pooh. So does she.

Yum. Oh, but he's married now.

Ko. But, bless my heart, what has that to do with it?

Nank. Katisha claims me in marriage, but I can't marry her because I'm married already—consequently she will insist on my execution, and if I'm executed, my wife will have to be buried alive.

Yum. You see our difficulty.

Ko. Yes. I don't know what's to be done.

Nank. There's one chance for you. If you could persuade Katisha to marry you, she would have no further claim on me, and in that case I could come to life without any fear of being put to death.

Ko. I marry Katisha!

Yum. I really think it's the only course.

Ko. But, my good girl, have you seen her? She's something appalling!

Pitti. Ah, that's only her face. She has a left elbow which people come miles to see!

Pooh. I am told that her right heel is much admired by connoisseurs.

Ko. My good sir, I decline to pin my heart upon any lady's right heel.

Nank. It comes to this: while Katisha is single, I prefer to be a disembodied spirit. When Katisha is married, existence will be as welcome as the flowers in spring.

DUET.—NANKI-POO AND KO-KO.

Nank. The flowers that bloom in the spring,
Tra la,
Breathe promise of merry sunshine—
As we merrily dance and we sing,
Tra la,

We welcome the hope that they bring,
Tra la,
Of a summer of roses and wine;
And that's what we mean when we say that a thing
Is welcome as flowers that bloom in the spring.
Tra la la la la la, etc.

All. And that's what we mean, etc.

Ko. The flowers that bloom in the spring,
Tra la,
Have nothing to do with the case.
I've got to take under my wing,
Tra la,
A most unattractive old thing,
Tra la,
With a caricature of a face;
And that's what I mean when I say, or I sing,
"Oh bother the flowers that bloom in the spring!
Tra la la la la la, etc.

All. And that's what he means when he ventures to sing, etc.

[*Dance and exeunt* NANKI-POO, YUM-YUM, POOH-BAH, *and* PITTI-SING.

Enter KATISHA.

RECITATIVE.

Alone, and yet alive! Oh sepulchre!
My soul is still my body's prisoner!
Remote the peace that Death alone can give—
My doom to wait! my punishment to live!

SONG.

Hearts do not break!
They sting and ache
For old sake's sake,
But do not die!
Though with each breath
They long for death,
As witnesseth
The living I!
Oh living I!
Come, tell me why,
When hope is gone
Dost thou stay on?
Why linger here,
Where all is drear?
May not a cheated maiden die?

Ko. (*approaching her timidly*). Katisha!

Kat. The miscreant who robbed me of my love! But vengeance pursues—they are heating the cauldron!

Ko. Katisha—behold a suppliant at your feet! Katisha—mercy!

Kat. Mercy? Had you mercy on him? See here, you! You have slain my love. He did not love *me*, but he would have loved me in time. I am an acquired taste—only the educated palate can appreciate *me*. I was educating *his* palate when he left me. Well, he is dead, and where shall I find another? It takes years to train a man to love me—am I to go through the weary round again, and, at the same time, implore mercy for you who robbed me of my prey—I mean my pupil—just as his education was on the point of completion? Oh, where shall I find another!

Ko. (*suddenly, and with great vehemence*). Here!—Here!

Kat. What!!!

Ko. (*with intense passion*). Katisha, for years I have loved you with a white-hot passion that is slowly but surely consuming my very vitals! Ah, shrink not from me! If there is aught of woman's mercy in your heart, turn not away from a love-sick suppliant whose every fibre thrills at your tiniest touch! True it is that, under a poor mask of disgust, I have endeavoured to conceal a passion whose inner fires are broiling the soul within me. But the fire will not be smothered—it defies all attempts at extinction, and, breaking forth, all the more eagerly for its long restraint, it declares itself in words that will not be weighed—that cannot be schooled—that should not be too severely criticized. Katisha, I dare not hope for your love—but I will not live without it!

Kat. You, whose hands still reek with the blood of my betrothed, dare to address words of passion to the woman you have so foully wronged!

Ko. I do—accept my love, or I perish on the spot!

Kat. Go to! Who knows so well as I that no one ever yet died of a broken heart!

Ko. You know not what you say. Listen!

SONG.—KO-KO.

On a tree by a river a little tom-tit
Sang, "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And I said to him, "Dicky-bird, why do you sit
Singing 'Willow, titwillow, titwillow'?"
"Is it weakness of intellect, birdie?" I cried,
"Or a rather tough worm in your little inside?"
With a shake of his poor little head he replied,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

He slapped at his chest, as he sat on that bough,
Singing, "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And a cold perspiration bespangled his brow,
Oh willow, titwillow, titwillow!

He sobbed and he sighed, and a gurgle he gave,
Then he threw himself into the billowy wave,
And an echo arose from the suicide's grave—
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

Now, I feel just as sure as I'm sure that my name
Isn't willow, titwillow, titwillow.
That 'twas blighted affection that made him exclaim,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And if you remain callous and obdurate, I
Shall perish as he did, and you will know why,
Though I probably shall not exclaim as I die,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

[*During this song* KATISHA *has been greatly affected, and at the end is almost in tears.*

Kat. (*whimpering*). Did he really die of love?

Ko. He really did.

Kat. All on account of a cruel little hen?

Ko. Yes.

Kat. Poor little chap!

Ko. It's an affecting tale, and quite true. I knew the bird intimately.

Kat. Did you? He must have been very fond of her!

Ko. His devotion was something extraordinary.

Kat. (*still whimpering*). Poor little chap! And—and if I refuse you, will you go and do the same?

Ko. At once.

Kat. No, no—you mustn't! Anything but that! (*Falls on his breast.*) Oh, I'm a silly little goose!

Ko. (*making a wry face*). You are!

Kat. And you won't hate me because I'm just a little teeny weeny wee bit blood-thirsty, will you?

Ko. Hate you? Oh, Katisha! is there not beauty even in blood-thirstiness?

Kat. My idea exactly!

DUET.—KO-KO AND KATISHA.

Kat. There is beauty in the bellow of the blast,
There is grandeur in the growing of the gale,
There is eloquent out-pouring
When the lion is a-roaring,
And the tiger is a-lashing of his tale!

Ko. Yes, I like to see a tiger
From the Congo or the Niger,
And especially when lashing of his tail!

Kat. Volcanoes have a splendour that is grim,
And earthquakes only terrify the dolts,

But to him who's scientific
There's nothing that's terrific
In the falling of a flight of thunderbolts!

Ko. Yes, in spite of all my meekness,
If I have a little weakness,
It's a passion for a flight of thunderbolts.

Both. If that is so,
Sing derry down derry!
It's evident, very,
Our tastes are one.
Away we'll go,
And merrily marry,
Nor tardily tarry
'Till day is done!

Ko. There is beauty in extreme old age—
Do you fancy you are elderly enough?
Information I'm requesting
On a subject interesting:
Is a maiden all the better when she's tough

Kat. Throughout this wide dominion
It's the general opinion
That she'll last a good deal longer when she's tough.

Ko. Are you old enough to marry do you think?
Won't you wait 'till you are "eighty in the shade"?
There's a fascination frantic
In a ruin that's romantic;
Do you think you are sufficiently decayed?

Kat. To the matter that you mention
I have given some attention,
And I think I am sufficiently decayed.

Both. If that is so,
Sing derry down derry!
It's evident, very,
Our tastes are one!
Away we'll go,
And merrily marry,
Not tardily tarry
Till day is done! [*Exeunt together.*

Flourish. *Enter the* MIKADO, *attended by* PISH-TUSH, *and Court.*

Mik. Now then, we've had a capital lunch, and we're quite ready. Have all the painful preparations been made?

Pish. Your Majesty, all is prepared.

Mik. Then produce the unfortunate gentleman and his two well-meaning but misguided accomplices.

Enter KO-KO, KATISHA, POOH-BAH, *and* PITTI-SING. *They throw themselves at the* MIKADO'S *feet.*

Kat. Mercy! Mercy for Ko-Ko! Mercy for Pitti-Sing! Mercy even for Pooh-Bah!

Mik. I beg your pardon, I don't think I quite caught that remark.

Kat. Mercy! My husband that was to have been is dead, and I have just married this miserable object.

Mik. Oh! You've not been long about it!

Ko. We were married before the Registrar.

Pooh. *I* am the Registrar.

Mik. I see. But my difficulty is that, as you have slain the Heir-Apparent——

Enter NANKI-POO *and* YUM-YUM. *They kneel.*

Nank. The Heir-Apparent is *not* slain.

Mik. Bless my heart, my son!

Yum. And your daughter-in-law elected!

Kat. (*seizing* Ko-Ko). Traitor, you have deceived me!

Mik. Yes, you are entitled to a little explanation, but I think he will give it better whole than in pieces.

Ko. Your Majesty, it's like this. It is true that I stated that I had killed Nanki-Poo——

Mik. Yes, with most affecting particulars.

Pooh. Merely corroborative detail intended to give verisimilitude to a bald and——

Ko. *Will* you refrain from putting in your oar? (*To* MIK.) It's like this: when your Majesty says, "Let a thing be done," it's as good as done—practically, it *is* done—because your Majesty's will is law. Your Majesty says, "Kill a gentleman," and a gentleman is told off to be killed. Consequently that gentleman is as good as dead—practically he *is* dead—and if he is dead, why not say so?

Mik. I see. Nothing could possibly be more satisfactory.

FINALE.

Yum and Nank. The threatened cloud has passed away,
And brightly shines the dawning day;
What though the night may come too soon,
We've years and years of afternoon!

Pit. Then let the throng
Our joy advance,
With laughing song
And merry dance,
With joyous shout and ringing cheer,
Inaugurate our new career!

Then let the throng, etc.

RUDDIGORE;

OR,

THE WITCH'S CURSE

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL SUPERNATURAL OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

First produced at the Savoy Theatre, London, by MR. R. D'OYLY CARTE, *on Saturday, January 22nd, 1887.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MORTALS.

ROBIN OAKAPPLE, *a Young Farmer* ...	MR. GEORGE GROSSMITH.
RICHARD DAUNTLESS, *his Foster-brother—a Man-o'-war's-man* ...	MR. DURWARD LELY.
SIR DESPARD MURGATROYD, *of Ruddigore—a Wicked Baronet*	MR. RUTLAND BARRINGTON.
OLD ADAM GOODHEART, *Robin's Faithful Servant*	MR. RUDOLPH LEWIS.
ROSE MAYBUD, *a Village Maiden* ...	MISS LEONORA BRAHAM.
MAD MARGARET	MISS JESSIE BOND.
DAME HANNAH, *Rose's Aunt*	MISS ROSINA BRANDRAM.
ZORAH, RUTH } *Professional Bridesmaids* ...	MISS JOSEPHINE FINDLAY. MISS LINDSAY.

GHOSTS.

SIR RUPERT MURGATROYD, *the First Baronet*	MR. PRICE.
SIR JASPER MURGATROYD, *the Third Baronet*	MR. CHARLES.
SIR LIONEL MURGATROYD, *the Sixth Baronet*	MR. TREVOR.
SIR CONRAD MURGATROYD, *the Twelfth Baronet*	MR. BURBANK.
SIR DESMOND MURGATROYD, *the Sixteenth Baronet*	MR. TUER.
SIR GILBERT MURGATROYD, *the Eighteenth Baronet*	MR. WILBRAHAM.
SIR MERVYN MURGATROYD, *the Twentieth Baronet*	MR. COX.
SIR RODERIC MURGATROYD, *the Twenty-first Baronet*	MR. RICHARD TEMPLE.

Chorus of Officers, Ancestors, and Professional Bridesmaids.

ACT I.

THE FISHING VILLAGE OF REDERRING, IN CORNWALL.

ACT II.

PICTURE GALLERY IN RUDDIGORE CASTLE.

TIME—EARLY IN THE PRESENT CENTURY.

RUDDIGORE;

OR,

THE WITCH'S CURSE.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*The fishing village of Rederring (in Cornwall).* ROSE MAYBUD'S *cottage is seen*

Enter Chorus of Bridesmaids. *They range themselves in front of* ROSE'S *cottage.*

CHORUS OF BRIDESMAIDS.

Fair is Rose as the bright May-day;
Soft is Rose as the warm west-wind;
Sweet is Rose as the new-mown hay—
Rose is the queen of maiden-kind!
Rose, all glowing
With virgin blushes, say—
Is anybody going
To marry you to-day?

SOLO.—ZORAH.

Every day, as the days roll on,
Bridesmaids' garb we gaily don,
Sure that a maid so fairly famed
Won't very long remain unclaimed.
Hour by hour, and day by day,
Several months have passed away.
And though she's the fairest flower that blows,
Nobody yet has married Rose!

CHORUS.

Rose, all glowing
With virgin blushes, say—
Is anybody going
To marry you to-day?

Enter OLD HANNAH, *from cottage.*

Han. Nay, gentle maidens, you sing well but vainly, for Rose is still heart-free, and looks but coldly upon her many suitors.

Zor. It's very disappointing. Every young man in the village is in love with her, but they are appalled by her beauty and modesty, and won't declare themselves; so, until she makes her own choice, there's no chance for anybody else.

Ruth. This is, perhaps, the only village in the world that possesses an endowed corps of professional bridesmaids who are bound to be on duty every day from ten to four—and it is at least six months since our services were required. The pious charity by which we exist is practically wasted!

Zor. We shall be disendowed—that will be the end of it! Dame Hannah—you're a nice old person—*you* could marry if you liked. There's old Adam—Robin's faithful servant—he loves you with all the frenzy of a boy of fourteen.

Han. Nay—that may never be, for I am pledged!

All. To whom?

Han. To an eternal maidenhood! Many years ago I was betrothed to a god-like youth who woo'd me under an assumed name. But on the very day upon which our wedding was to have been celebrated, I discovered that he was no other than Sir Roderic Murgatroyd, one of the bad Baronets of Ruddigore, and the uncle of the man who now bears that title. As a son of that accursed race he was no husband for an honest girl, so, madly as I loved him, I left him then and there. He died but ten years since, but I never saw him again.

Zor. But why should you not marry a bad Baronet of Ruddigore?

Ruth. All baronets are bad; but was he worse than other baronets?

Han. My child, he was accursed.

Zor. But who cursed him? Not you, I trust!

Han. The curse is on all his line, and has been ever since the time of Sir Rupert, the first Baronet. Listen, and you shall hear the legend.

LEGEND.—HANNAH.

Sir Rupert Murgatroyd
His leisure and his riches
He ruthlessly employed
In persecuting witches.
With fear he'd make them quake—

He'd duck them in his lake—
He'd break their bones
With sticks and stones,
And burn them at the stake!

Chorus. This sport he much enjoyed,
Did Rupert Murgatroyd—
No sense of shame
Or pity came
To Rupert Murgatroyd!

Once, on the village green,
A palsied hag he roasted,
And what took place, I ween,
Shook his composure boasted;
For, as the torture grim
Seized on each withered limb,
The writhing dame,
'Mid fire and flame,
Yelled forth this curse on him:—

"Each lord of Ruddigore,
Despite his best endeavour,
Shall do one crime, or more,
Once, every day, for ever!
This doom he can't defy
However he may try,
For should he stay
His hand, that day
In torture he shall die!"

The prophecy came true:
Each heir who held the title
Had, every day, to do
Some crime of import vital;
Until, with guilt o'erplied,
"I'll sin no more!" he cried,
And on the day
He said that say,
In agony he died!

Chorus. And thus, with sinning cloyed,
Has died each Murgatroyd,
And so shall fall,
Both one and all,
Each coming Murgatroyd!

[*Exeunt* Chorus of Bridesmaids.

Enter ROSE MAYBUD *from cottage, with small basket on her arm.*

Han. Whither away, dear Rose? On some errand of charity, as is thy wont?

Rose. A few gifts, dear aunt, for deserving villagers. Lo, here is some peppermint rock for old gaffer Gadderby, a set of

false teeth for pretty little Ruth Rowbottom, and a pound of snuff for the poor orphan girl on the hill.

Han. Ah, Rose, pity that so much goodness should not help to make some gallant youth happy for life! Rose, why dost thou harden that little heart of thine? Is there none hereaway whom thou couldst love?

Rose. And if there were such an one, verily it would ill become me to tell him so.

Han. Nay, dear one, where true love is, there is little need of prim formality.

Rose. Hush, dear aunt, for thy words pain me sorely. Hung in a plated dish-cover to the knocker of the workhouse door, with nought that I could call mine own, save a change of baby-linen and a book of etiquette, little wonder if I have always regarded that work as a voice from a parent's tomb. This hallowed volume (*producing a book of etiquette*), composed, if I may believe the title-page, by no less an authority than the wife of a Lord Mayor, has been, through life, my guide and monitor. By its solemn precepts I have learnt to test the moral worth of all who approach me. The man who bites his bread, or eats peas with a knife, I look upon as a lost creature, and he who has not acquired the proper way of entering and leaving a room is the object of my pitying horror. There are those in this village who bite their nails, dear aunt, and nearly all are wont to use their pocket-combs in public places. In truth I could pursue this painful theme much further, but behold, I have said enough.

Han. But is there not one among them who is faultless, in thine eyes? For example—young Robin. He combines the manners of a Marquis with the morals of a Methodist. Couldst thou not love *him*?

Rose. And even if I could, how should I confess it unto him? For lo, he is shy, and sayeth nought!

BALLAD.—ROSE.

If somebody there chanced to be
Who loved me in a manner true,
My heart would point him out to me,
And I would point him out to you.
(*Referring to book.*) But here it says of those who point,
Their manners must be out of joint—
You *may* not point—
You *must* not point—
It's manners out of joint, to point!
Had I the love of such as he,
Some quiet spot he'd take me to,
Then he could whisper it to me,
And I could whisper it to you;

(*Referring to book.*) But whispering, I've somewhere met,
Is contrary to etiquette:
Where can it be? (*Searching book.*)
Now let me see— (*Finding reference.*)
Yes, Yes!
It's contrary to etiquette! [*Showing it to* HANNAH.

If any well-bred youth I knew,
Polite and gentle, neat and trim,
Then I would hint as much to you,
And you could hint as much to him.
(*Referring to book.*) But here it says, in plainest print,
"It's most unladylike to hint"—
You *may* not hint,
You *must* not hint—
It says you mustn't hint, in print!
And if I loved him through and through—

(True love and not a passing whim),
Then I could speak of it to you,
And you could speak of it to him.
But here I find it doesn't do
To speak until you're spoken to.
(*Referring to book.*) Where can it be? (*Searching book.*)
Now let me see— (*Finding reference.*)
"Don't speak until you're spoken to"!
[*Exit* HANNAH.

Rose. Poor aunt! Little did the good soul think, when she breathed the hallowed name of Robin, that he would do even as well as another. But he resembleth all the youths in this village, in that he is unduly bashful in my presence, and lo, it is hard to bring him to the point. But soft, he is here! [ROSE *is about to go when* ROBIN *enters and calls her.*

Rob. Mistress Rose!

Rose (*surprised*). Master Robin!

Rob. I wished to say that—it is fine.

Rose. It is passing fine.

Rob. But we do want rain.

Rose. Ay, sorely! Is that all?

Rob. (*sighing*). That is all.

Rose. Good day, Master Robin!

Rob. Good day, Mistress Rose! (*Both going—both stop.*)

Rose. } I crave pardon, I—
Rob. } I beg pardon, I—

Rose. You were about to say?

Rob. I would fain consult you.

Rose. Truly?

Rob. It is about a friend.

Rose. In truth I have a friend myself.

Rob. Indeed? I mean, of course——
Rose. And I would fain consult you——
Rob. (*anxiously*). About him?
Rose (*prudishly*). About *her*.
Rob. (*relieved*). Let us consult one another.

DUET.—ROBIN AND ROSE.

Rob. I know a youth who loves a little maid—
(Hey, but his face is a sight for to see!)
Silent is he, for he's modest and afraid—
(Hey, but he's timid as a youth can be!)
Rose. I know a maid who loves a gallant youth,
(Hey, but she sickens as the days go by!)
She cannot tell him all the sad, sad truth—
(Hey, but I think that little maid will die!)

Rob. Poor little man!
Rose. Poor little maid!
Rob. Poor little man!
Rose. Poor little maid!

Both. Now, tell me pray, and tell me true,
What in the world should the { young man / maiden } do?
Rob. He cannot eat and he cannot sleep—
(Hey, but his face is a sight for to see!)
Daily he goes for to wail—for to weep
(Hey, but he's wretched as a youth can be!)
Rose. She's very thin and she's very pale—
(Hey, but she sickens as the days go by!)
Daily she goes for to weep—for to wail—
(Hey, but I think that little maid will die!)

Rob. Poor little maid!
Rose. Poor little man!
Rob. Poor little maid!
Rose. Poor little man!

Both. Now, tell me pray, and tell me true,
What in the world should the { young man / maiden } do?
Rose. If I were the youth I should offer her my name—
(Hey, but her face is a sight for to see!)
Rob. If I were the maid I should feed his honest flame—
(Hey, but he's bashful as a youth can be!)
Rose. If I were the youth I should speak to her to-day—
(Hey, but she sickens as the days go by!)
Rob. If I were the maid I should meet the lad half way—
(For I really do believe that timid youth will die!)

Rose. Poor little man!
Rob. Poor little maid!
Rose. Poor little man!
Rob. Poor little maid!

Both. I thank you, { miss, / sir, } for your counsel true;
I'll tell that { youth / maid } what { he / she } ought to do!

[*Exit* Rose.

Rob. Poor child! I sometimes think that if she wasn't quite so particular I might venture—but no, no—even then I should be unworthy of her! [*He sits desponding.*

Enter Old Adam.

Adam. My kind master is sad! Dear Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd——

Rob. Hush! As you love me, breathe not that hated name. Twenty years ago, in horror at the prospect of inheriting that hideous title, and with it the ban that compels all who succeed to the baronetcy to commit at least one deadly crime per day, for life, I fled my home, and concealed myself in this innocent village under the name of Robin Oakapple. My younger brother, Despard, believing me to be dead, succeeded to the title and its attendant curse. For twenty years I have been dead and buried. Don't dig me up now.

Adam. Dear master, it shall be as you wish, for have I not sworn to obey you for ever in all things? Yet, as we are here alone, and as I belong to that particular description of good old man to whom the truth is a refreshing novelty, let me call you by your own right title once more! (Robin *assents.*) Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd! Baronet! Of Ruddigore! Whew! It's like eight hours at the seaside!

Rob. My poor old friend! Would there were more like you!

Adam. Would there were indeed! But I bring you good tidings. Your foster-brother, Richard, has returned from sea—his ship the *Tom-Tit* rides yonder at anchor, and he himself is even now in this very village!

Rob. My beloved foster-brother? No, no—it cannot be!

Adam. It is even so—and see, he comes this way!

Enter Chorus of Bridesmaids.

Chorus.

From the briny sea
Comes young Richard, all victorious!
Valorous is he—
His achievements all are glorious!
Let the welkin ring
With the news we bring
Sing it—shout it—
Tell about it—
Safe and sound returneth he!
All victorious from the sea!

Enter RICHARD. *The* Girls *welcome him as he greets old acquaintances.*

BALLAD.—RICHARD.

I shipped, d'ye see, in a Revenue sloop,
And, off Cape Finistere,
A merchantman we see,
A Frenchman, going free,
So we made for the bold Mounseer.
D'ye see?
We made for the bold Mounseer.
But she proved to be a Frigate—and she up with her ports,
And fires with a thirty-two!
It come uncommon near,
But we answered a cheer,
Which paralyzed the Parly-voo,
D'ye see?
Which paralyzed the Parly-voo!

Then our Captain he up and he says, says he,
"That chap we need not fear,—
We can take her, if we like,
She is sartin for to strike,
For she's only a darned Mounseer,
D'ye see?
She's only a darned Mounseer!
But to fight a French fal-lal—it's like hittin' of a gal—
It's a lubberly thing for to do;
For we, with all our faults,
Why, we're sturdy British salts,
While she's only a Parley-voo,
D'ye see?
A miserable Parley-voo!"

So we up with our helm, and we scuds before the breeze,
As we gives a compassionating cheer;
Froggee answers with a shout
As he sees us go about,
Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer,
D'ye see?
Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer!
And I'll wager in their joy they kissed each other's cheek
(Which is what them furriners do).
And they blessed their lucky stars
We were hardy British tars
Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo,
D'ye see?
Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo!

[*Exeunt* Chorus, *as* ROBIN *comes forward.*

Rob. Richard!
Rich. Robin!
Rob. My beloved foster-brother, and very dearest friend

welcome home again after ten long years at sea! It is such deeds as you have just described that cause our flag to be loved and dreaded throughout the civilized world!

Rich. Why, lord love ye, Rob, that's but a trifle to what we *have* done in the way of sparing life. I believe I may say, without exaggeration, that the marciful little *Tom-Tit* has spared more French frigates than any craft afloat! But 'taint for a British seaman to brag, so I'll just stow my jawin' tackle and belay. (ROBIN *sighs.*) But 'vast heavin', messmate, what's brought *you* all a-cockbill?

Rob. Alas, Dick, I love Rose Maybud, and love in vain!

Rich. *You* love in vain? Come, that's too good! Why you're a fine strapping muscular young fellow—tall and strong as a to'-gall'n-m'st—taut as a fore-stay—ay, and a barrow-knight to boot, if all had their rights!

Rob. Hush, Richard—not a word about my true rank, which none here suspect. Yes, I know well enough that few men are better calculated to win a woman's heart than I. I'm a fine fellow, Dick, and worthy any woman's love—happy the girl who gets me, say I. But I'm timid, Dick; shy, nervous, modest, retiring, diffident, and I cannot tell her, Dick, I cannot tell her! Ah, you've no idea what a poor opinion I have of myself, and how little I deserve it.

Rich. Robin, do you call to mind how, years ago, we swore that, come what might, we would always act upon our hearts' dictates?

Rob. Ay, Dick, and I've always kept that oath. In doubt, difficulty, and danger, I've always asked my heart what I should do, and it has never failed me.

Rich. Right! Let your heart be your compass, with a clear conscience for your binnacle light, and you'll sail ten knots on a bowline, clear of shoals, rocks, and quicksands! Well now, what does my heart say in this here difficult situation? Why, it says, "Dick," it says—(it calls me "Dick" acos it's known me from a babby)—"Dick," it says, "*you* ain't shy—*you* ain't modest—speak you up for him as is!" Robin, my lad, just you lay me alongside, and when she's becalmed under my lee, I'll spin her a yarn that shall sarve to fish you two together for life!

Rob. Will you do this thing for me? Can you, do you think? Yes. (*Feeling his pulse.*) There's no false modesty about *you.* Your, what I would call bumptious self-assertiveness (I mean the expresssion in its complimentary sense), has already made you a bos'n's mate, and it will make an admiral of you in time, if you work it properly, you dear, incompetent

old imposter! My dear fellow, I'd give my right arm for one tenth of your modest assurance!

SONG.—ROBIN.

My boy, you may take it from me
That, of all the afflictions accurst
With which a man's saddled
And hampered and addled,
A diffident nature's the worst.
Though clever as clever can be—
A Crichton of early romance—
You must stir it and stump it,
And blow your own trumpet,
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance,
If you wish in the world to advance,
Your merits you're bound to enhance,
You must stir it and stump it,
And blow your own trumpet,
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!

Now take, for example, *my* case:
I've a bright intellectual brain—
In all London city
There's no one so witty—
I've thought so again and again.
I've a highly intelligent face—
My features cannot be denied—
But, whatever I try, sir,
I fail in—and why, sir?
I'm modesty personified!
If you wish in the world to advance, etc.

As a poet, I'm tender and quaint—
I've passion and fervour and grace—
From Ovid and Horace
To Swinburne and Morris,
They all of them take a back place.
Then I sing and I play and I paint:
Though none are accomplished as I,
To say so were treason:
You ask me the reason?
I'm diffident, modest, and shy!
If you wish in the world to advance, etc.

[*Exit* ROBIN

Rich. (*looking after him*). Ah, it's a thousand pities he's such a poor opinion of himself, for a finer fellow don't walk. Well, I'll do my best for him. "Plead for him as though it was for your own father"—that's what my heart's a remarkin to me just now. But, here she comes! Steady! Steady it is

Enter ROSE—*he is much struck by her.*

By the Port Admiral, but she's a tight little craft! Come come, she's not for you, Dick, and yet—she's fit to marry Lord

Nelson! By the Flag of Old England, I can't look at her unmoved.

Rose. Sir, you are agitated.

Rich. Ay, ay, my lass, well said! I am agitated, true enough!—took flat aback, my girl; but 'tis naught—'twill pass. (*Aside.*) This here heart of mine's a dictatin' to me like anythink. Question is, have I a right to disregard its promptings?

Rose. Can I do aught to relieve thine anguish, for it seemeth to me that thou art in sore trouble? This apple—— (*Offering a damaged apple.*)

Rich. (*looking at it and returning it*). No, my lass, 'taint that. I'm—I'm took flat aback—I never see anything like you in all my born days. Parbuckle me, if you ain't the loveliest gal I've ever set eyes on. There—I can't say fairer than that, can I?

Rose. No. (*Aside.*) The question is, is it meet that an utter stranger should thus express himself? (*Refers to book.*) Yes, —"Always speak the truth."

Rich. I'd no thoughts of sayin' this here to you on my own account, for, truth to tell, I was chartered by another; but when I see you my heart it up and it says, says it, "This is the very lass for *you*, Dick—speak up to her, Dick," it says —(it calls me Dick acos we was at school together)—"tell her all, Dick," it says, "never sail under false colours—it's mean!" *That's* what my heart tells me to say, and in my rough, common-sailor fashion, I've said it, and I'm a-waiting for your reply. I'm a tremblin', miss. Lookye here. (*Holding out his hand.*) That's narvousness!

Rose (*aside*). Now, how should a maiden deal with such an one? (*Consults book.*) "Keep no one in unnecessary suspense." (*Aloud.*) Behold, I will not keep you in unnecessary suspense. (*Refers to book.*) "In accepting an offer of marriage, do so with apparent hesitation." (*Aloud.*) I take you, but with a certain show of reluctance. (*Refers to book.*) "Avoid any appearance of eagerness." (*Aloud.*) Though you will bear in mind that I am far from anxious to do so. (*Refers to book.*) "A little show of emotion will not be misplaced!" (*Aloud.*) Pardon this tear! (*Wipes her eye.*)

Rich. Rose, you've made me the happiest blue-jacket in England! I wouldn't change places with the Admiral of the Fleet, no matter who he's a huggin' of at this present moment! But, axin' your pardon, miss (*wiping his lips with his hand*), might I be permitted to salute the flag I'm a-goin' to sail under?

Rose (*referring to book*). "An engaged young lady should

not permit too many familiarities." (*Aloud.*) Once! (RICHARD *kisses her.*)

DUET.—RICHARD AND ROSE.

Rich. The battle's roar is over,
O my love!
Embrace thy tender lover,
O my love!
From tempests' welter,
From war's alarms,
O give me shelter
Within those arms!
Thy smile alluring,
All heart-ache curing,
Gives peace enduring,
O my love!

Rose. If heart both true and tender,
O my love!
A life-love can engender,
O my love!
A truce to sighing
And tears of brine,
For joy undying
Shall aye be mine,
And thou and I, love,
Shall live and die, love,
Without a sigh, love—
My own, my love!

Enter ROBIN, *with* Chorus of Bridesmaids.

CHORUS.

If well his suit has sped,
Oh, may they soon be wed!
Oh, tell us, tell us, pray,
What doth the maiden say?
In singing are we justified,
"Hail the Bridegroom—hail the Bride"?

Rob. Well—what news? Have you spoken to her?
Rich. Ay, my lad, I have—so to speak—spoke her.
Rob. And she refuses?
Rich. Why, no, I can't truly say she do.
Rob. Then she accepts! My darling! (*Embraces her.*)

BRIDESMAIDS.

Hail the Bridegroom—hail the Bride!
Let the nuptial knot be tied:
In fair phrases
Hymn their praises,
Hail the Bridegroom—hail the Bride!

Rose (*aside, referring to her book*). Now, what should a maiden do when she is embraced by the wrong gentleman?

Rich. Belay, my lad, belay. You don't understand.

Rose. Oh, sir, belay, I beseech you!

Rich. You see, it's like this: she accepts—but it's *me!*

Rob. You! [RICHARD *embraces* ROSE.

BRIDESMAIDS.

Hail the Bridegroom—hail the Bride!
When the nuptial knot is tied

Rob. (*interrupting angrily*). Hold your tongues, will you! Now then, what does this mean?

Rich. My poor lad, my heart grieves for thee; but it's like this: the moment I see her, and just as I was a-goin' to mention your name, my heart it up and it says, says it, "Dick, you've fell in love with her yourself," it says. "Be honest and sailor-like—don't skulk under false colours—speak up," it says, "take her, you dog, and with her my blessin'!"

BRIDESMAIDS.

"Hail the Bridegroom—hail the Bride!"

Rob. Will you be quiet! Go away! (Chorus *make faces at him and exeunt.*) Vulgar girls!

Rich. What could I do? I'm bound to obey my heart's dictates.

Rob. Of course—no doubt. It's quite right—I don't mind—that is, not particularly—only it's—it *is* disappointing, you know.

Rose (*to* ROBIN). Oh, but, sir, I knew not that thou didst seek me in wedlock, or in very truth I should not have hearkened unto this man, for behold, he is but a lowly mariner, and very poor withal, whereas thou art a tiller of the land, and thou hast fat oxen, and many sheep and swine, a considerable dairy farm, and much corn and oil!

Rich. That's true, my lass; but it's done now, ain't it, Rob?

Rose. Still it maybe that I should not be happy in thy love. I am passing young, and little able to judge. Moreover, as to thy character I know naught!

Rob. Nay, Rose, I'll answer for that. Dick has won thy love fairly. Broken-hearted as I am, I'll stand up for Dick through thick and thin!

Dick (*with emotion*). Thankye, messmate! that's well said. That's spoken honest. Thankye, Rob! (*Grasps his hand.*)

Rose. Yet methinks I have heard that sailors are but worldly men, and little prone to lead serious and thoughtful lives!

Rob. And what then? Admit that Dick is *not* a steady

character, and that when he's excited he uses language that would make your hair curl.—Grant that—he does. It's the truth, and I'm not going to deny it. But look at his *good* qualities. He's as nimble as a pony, and his hornpipe is the talk of the fleet!

Rich. Thankye, Rob! That's well spoken. Thankye Rob!

Rose. But it maybe that he drinketh strong waters which do bemuse a man, and make him even as the wild beasts of the desert!

Rob. Well, suppose he does, and I don't say he don't, for rum's his bane, and ever has been. He *does* drink—I won't deny it. But what of that Look at his arms—tattooed to the shoulder! (DICK *rolls up his sleeves.*) No, no—I won't hear a word against Dick!

Rose. But they say that mariners are but rarely true to those whom they profess to love!

Rob. Granted—granted—and I don't say that Dick isn't as bad as any of 'em. (DICK *chuckles.*) You are, you know you are, you dog! a devil of a fellow—a regular out-and-out Lothario! But what then? You can't have everything, and a better hand at turning-in a dead-eye don't walk a deck! And what an accomplishment *that* is in a family man! No, no—not a word against Dick. I'll stick up for him through thick and thin!

Rich. Thankye, Rob, thankye. You're a true friend. I've acted accordin' to my heart's dictates, and such orders as them no man should disobey.

ENSEMBLE.—RICHARD, ROBIN, ROSE.

In sailing o'er life's ocean wide
Your heart should be your only guide;
With summer sea and favouring wind
Yourself in port you'll surely find.

SOLO.—RICHARD.

My heart says, "To this maiden strike—
She's captured you.
She's just the sort of girl you like—
You know you do.
If other man her heart should gain,
I shall resign."
That's what it says to me quite plain,
This heart of mine.

SOLO.—ROBIN.

My heart says, "You've a prosperous lot.
With acres wide;
You mean to settle all you've got
Upon your bride.

It don't pretend to shape my acts
By word or sign;
It merely states these simple facts,
This heart of mine!

SOLO.—ROSE.

Ten minutes since my heart said "white"—
It now says "black."
It then said "left"—it now says "right"—
Hearts often tack.
I must obey its latest strain—
You tell me so. [*To* RICHARD.
But should it change its mind again,
I'll let you know.
[*Turning from* RICHARD *to* ROBIN *who embraces her.*

ENSEMBLE.

In sailing o'er life's ocean wide
No doubt the heart should be your guide,
But it is awkward when you find
A heart that does not know its mind!
[*Exeunt* ROBIN *with* ROSE *and* RICHARD, *weeping.*

Enter MAD MARGARET. *She is wildly dressed in picturesque tatters, and is an obvious caricacture of theatrical madness.*

SCENA.—MARGARET.

Cheerily carols the lark
Over the cot.
Merrily whistles the clerk
Scratching a blot.
But the lark
And the clerk,
I remark,
Comfort me not!

Over the ripening peach
Buzzes the bee.
Splash on the billowy beach
Tumbles the sea.
But the peach
And the beach
They are each
Nothing to me!

And why?
Who am I?
Daft Madge! Crazy Meg!
Mad Margaret! Poor Peg!
He! he! he! he! he! (*Chuckling.*)

Mad, I?
Yes, very!
But why?
Mystery!
Don't call!
Whisht! whisht!

No crime—
'Tis only
That I'm
Love—lonely!
That's all!
Whisht! whisht!

BALLAD.

To a garden full of posies
Cometh one to gather flowers,
And he wanders through its bowers
Toying with the wanton roses,
Who, uprising from their beds,
Hold on high their shameless heads,
With their pretty lips a-pouting,
Never doubting—never doubting
That for Cytherean posies
He would gather aught but roses!

In a nest of weeds and nettles,
Lay a violet, half-hidden,
Hoping that his glance unbidden
Yet might fall upon her petals,
Though she lived alone, apart,
Hope lay nestling at her heart,
But, alas, the cruel awaking
Set her little heart' abreaking,
For he gathered for his posies
Only roses—only roses! [*Bursts into tears.*

Enter ROSE.

Rose. A maiden, and in tears? Can I do aught to soften thy sorrow? This apple—— (*Offering apple.*)

Mar. (*examines it and rejects it*). No! (*Mysteriously.*) Tell me, are you mad?

Rose. I? No! That is, I think not.

Mar. That's well! Then you don't love Sir Despard Murgatroyd? All mad girls love him. *I* love him. I'm poor Mad Margaret—Crazy Meg—Poor Peg! He! he! he! he! (*Chuckling.*)

Rose. Thou lovest the bad Baronet of Ruddigore? Oh, horrible—too horrible?

Mar. You pity me? Then be my mother! The squirrel had a mother; but she drank, and the squirrel fled! Hush!

They sing a brave song in our parts—it runs somewhat thus:— (*Sings.*)

"The cat and the dog and the little puppee
Sat down in a—down in a—in a——"

I forget what they sat down in, but so the song goes! Listen—I've come to pinch her!

Rose. Mercy, whom!

Mar. You mean "who."

Rose. Nay! it is the accusative after the verb.

Mar. True. (*Whispers melodramatically.*) I have come to pinch Rose Maybud!

Rose (*aside, alarmed*). Rose Maybud!

Mar. Ay! I love him—he loved me once. But that's all gone. Fisht! He gave me an Italian glance—thus—(*Business.*)—and made me his. He will give *her* an Italian glance, and make *her* his. But it shall not be, for I'll stamp on her—stamp on her—stamp on her! Did you ever kill anybody? No? Why not? Listen—I killed a fly this morning! It buzzed, and I wouldn't have it. So it died—pop! So shall she!

Rose. But behold, *I* am Rose Maybud, and I would fain not die "pop."

Mar. You are Rose Maybud!

Rose. Yes, sweet Rose Maybud!

Mar. Strange! They told me she was beautiful! And *he* loves *you!* No, no! If I thought that, I would treat you as the auctioneer and land-agent treated the lady-bird—I would rend you asunder!

Rose. Nay, be pacified, for behold I am pledged to another, and lo, we are to be wedded this very day!

Mar. Swear me that! Come to a Commissioner and let me have it on affidavit! *I* once made an affidavit—but it died—it died—it died! But see, they come—Sir Despard and his evil crew! Hide, hide—they are all mad—quite mad!

Rose. What makes you think that?

Mar. Hush! They sing choruses in public. That's mad enough, I think! Go—hide away, or they will seize you. Hush! Quite softly—quite, quite softly!

[*Exeunt together, on tiptoe.*

Enter Chorus of Bucks and Blades, *heralded by* Chorus of Bridesmaids.

CHORUS OF BRIDESMAIDS.

Welcome, gentry,
For your entry
Sets our tender hearts a-beating.

Men of station,
Admiration
Prompts this unaffected greeting.
Hearty greeting offer we!

Your exceeding
Easy breeding—
Just the thing our hearts to pillage—
Cheers us, charms us,
Quite disarms us:
Welcome, welcome, to our village;
To our village welcome be

CHORUS OF BUCKS AND BLADES.

When thoroughly tired
Of being admired
By ladies of gentle degree—degree,
With flattery sated,
High-flown and inflated,
Away from the city we flee—we flee!

From charms intramural
To prettiness rural
The sudden transition
Is simply Elysian,
So come, Amaryllis,
Come, Chloe and Phyllis,
Your slaves, for the moment, are we

All From charms intramural, etc.

CHORUS OF BRIDESMAIDS.

The sons of the tillage
Who dwell in the village
Are people of lowly degree—degree.
Though honest and active
They're most unattractive,
And awkward as awkward can be—can be.
They're clumsy clodhoppers
With axes and choppers,
And shepherds and ploughmen,
And drovers and cowmen,
And hedgers and reapers,
And carters and keepers,
But never a lover for me!

All. They're clumsy clodhoppers, etc.
All. So welcome, gentry
For { your / our } entry
Sets { our / their } tender hearts a-beating, etc.

Enter SIR DESPARD MURGATROYD.

SONG AND CHORUS.—SIR DESPARD.

Sir D. Oh, why am I moody and sad?
Ch. Can't guess!
Sir D. And why am I guiltily mad?
Ch. Confess!
Sir D. Because I am thoroughly bad!
Ch. Oh yes—
Sir D. You'll see it at once in my face.
Oh, why am I husky and hoarse?
Ch. Ah, why?
Sir D. It's the workings of conscience, of course.
Ch. Fie, fie!
Sir D. And huskiness stands for remorse,
Ch. Oh my!
Sir D. At least it does so in my case!

Sir D. When in crime one is fully employed—
Ch. Like you—
Sir D. Your expression gets warped and destroyed:
Ch. It do.
Sir D. It's a penalty none can avoid;
Ch. How true!
Sir D. I once was a nice-looking youth;
But like stone from a strong catapult—
Ch. (*explaining to each other*). A trice—
Sir D. I rushed at my terrible cult—
Ch. (*explaining to each other*). That's vice—
Sir D. Observe the unpleasant result!
Ch. Not nice.
Sir D. Indeed I am telling the truth!

Sir D. Oh, innocent, happy though poor!
Ch. That's we—
Sir D. If I had been virtuous, I'm sure—
Ch. Like me—
Sir D. I should be as nice-looking as you're!
Ch. May be.
Sir D. You are very nice-looking indeed!
Oh, innocents, listen in time—
Ch. We *doe*,
Sir D. Avoid an existence of crime—
Ch. Just so—
Sir D. Or you'll be as ugly as I'm—
Ch. (*loudly*). No! No!
Sir D. And now, if you please, we'll proceed.

[*All the* Girls *express their horror of* SIR DESPARD. *As he approaches them they fly from him, terror-stricken, leaving him alone on the stage.*

Sir. D. Poor children, how they loathe me—me whose hands are certainly steeped in infamy, but whose heart is as the heart

of a little child! But what *is* a poor baronet to do, when a whole picture-gallery of ancestors step down from their frames and threaten him with an excruciating death, if he hesitate to commit his daily crime? But, ha! ha! I am even with them! (*Mysteriously.*) I get my crime over the first thing in the morning, and then, ha! ha! for the rest of the day I do good—I do good—I do good! (*Melodramatically.*) Two days since, I stole a child and built an orphan asylum. Yesterday I robbed a bank and endowed a bishopric. To-day I carry off Rose Maybud, and atone with a cathedral! This is what it is to be the sport and toy of a Picture Gallery! But I will be bitterly revenged upon them! I will give them all to the Nation, and nobody shall ever look upon their faces again!

Enter RICHARD.

Rich. Ax your honour's pardon, but——

Sir D. Ha! observed! And by a mariner! What would you with me, fellow?

Rich. Your honour, I'm a poor man-o'-war's man, becalmed in the doldrums.

Sir D. I don't know them.

Rich. And I make bold to ax your honour's advice. Does your honour know what it is to have a heart?

Sir D. My honour knows what it is to have a complete apparatus for conducting the circulation of the blood through the veins and arteries of the human body.

Rich. Ay, but has your honour a heart that ups and looks you in the face, and gives you quarter-deck orders that it's life and death to disobey?

Sir D. I have not a heart of that description, but I have a Picture Gallery that presumes to take that liberty.

Rich. Well, your honour, it's like this. Your honour had an elder brother——

Sir D. It had.

Rich. Who should have inherited your title and, with it, its cuss.

Sir D. Ay; but he died. Oh, Ruthven!

Rich. He didn't.

Sir D. He did *not*?

Rich. He didn't. On the contrary, he lives in this here very village, under the name of Robin Oakapple, and he's a-going to marry Rose Maybud this very day.

Sir D. Ruthven alive, and going to marry Rose Maybud Can this be possible?

Rich. Now the question I was going to ask your honour is—ought I to tell your honour this?

Sir D. I don't know. It's a delicate point. I think you ought. Mind, I'm not sure, but I think so.

Rich. That's what my heart says. It says, "Dick," it says (it calls me Dick acos it's entitled to take that liberty)—"that there young gal would recoil from him if she knowed what he really were. Ought you to stand off and on, and let this young gal take this false step and never fire a shot across her bows to bring her to? No," it says, "you did *not* ought." And I won't ought, accordin'.

Sir D. Then you really feel yourself at liberty to tell me that my elder brother lives—that I may charge him with his cruel deceit, and transfer to his shoulders the hideous thraldom under which I have laboured for so many years! Free—free at last! Free to live a blameless life, and to die beloved and regretted by all who knew me!

DUET.—SIR DESPARD AND RICHARD.

Rich. You understand?
Sir D. I think I do;
With vigour unshaken
This step shall be taken.
It's neatly planned.
Rich. I think so too;
I'll readily bet it
You'll never regret it!

Both. For duty, duty must be done;
The rule applies to every one,
And painful though that duty be,
To shirk the task were fiddle-de-dee!

Sir D The bridegroom comes—
Rich. Likewise the bride—
The maidens are very
Elated and merry;
They are her chums.
Sir D. To lash their pride
Were almost a pity,
The pretty committee!

Both. But duty, duty must be done,
The rule applies to every one,
And painful though that duty be,
To shirk the task were fiddle-de-dee!

[*Exeunt* RICHARD *and* SIR DESPARD.

Enter Chorus of Bridesmaids *and* Bucks.

CHORUS OF BRIDESMAIDS.

Hail the bride of seventeen summers;
In fair phrases
Hymn her praises;
Lift your song on high, all comers.
She rejoices
In your voices.
Smiling summer bears upon her,
Shedding every blessing on her:
Maidens, greet her—
Kindly treat her
You may all be brides some day!

CHORUS OF BUCKS.

Hail the bridegroom who advances,
Agitated,
Yet elated.
He's in easy circumstances,
Young and lusty,
True and trusty:
Happiness untold awaits them
When the parson consecrates them;
People near them,
Loudly cheer them—
You'll be bridegrooms some fine day!

Enter ROBIN, *attended by* RICHARD *and* OLD ADAM, *meeting* ROSE, *attended by* ZORAH *and* DAME HANNAH. ROSE *and* ROBIN *embrace.*

MADRIGAL.

Rose. Where the buds are blossoming,
Smiling welcome to the spring,
Lovers choose a wedding-day—
Life is love in merry May!

Girls. Spring is green—Fal lal la!
Summer's rose—Fal lal la!

All. It is sad when summer goes,
Fal la!

Men. Autumn's gold—Fal lal la!
Winter's gray—Fal lal la!

All. Winter still is far away—
Fal la!

Leaves in autumn fade and fall,
Winter is the end of all.
Spring and summer teem with glee:
Spring and summer, then, for me!
Fal la!

Hannah. In the spring-time seed is sown :
In the summer grass is mown :
In the autumn you may reap :
Winter is the time for sleep.

Girls. Spring is hope—Fal lal la !
Summer's joy—Fal lal la !
All. Spring and summer never cloy,
Fal la !
Men. Autumn, toil—Fal lal la !
Winter, rest—Fal lal la !
All. Winter, after all, is best—
Fal la !

All. Spring and summer pleasure you,
Autumn, ay, and winter too—
Every season has its cheer
Life is lovely all the year !
Fal la !

GAVOTTE.

After Gavotte, enter SIR DESPARD.

Sir D. Hold, bride and bridegroom, ere you wed each other,
I claim young Robin as my elder brother !
Rob. (*aside*). Ah, lost one !
Sir D. His rightful title I have long enjoyed :
I claim him as Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd !
Rose. (*wildly*). Deny the falsehood, Robin, as you should.
It is a plot !
Rob. I would, if conscientiously I could,
But I cannot !
All. Ah, base one !

SOLO.—ROBIN.

As pure and blameless peasant,
I cannot, I regret,
Deny a truth unpleasant,
I am that Baronet !
All. He is that Baronet !
But when completely rated
Bad baronet am I,
That I am what he's stated
I'll recklessly deny !
All. He'll recklessly deny !
Rob. When I'm a bad bart. I will tell taradiddles !
All. He'll tell taradiddles when he's a bad bart.
Rob. I'll play a bad part on the falsest of fiddles.
All. On very false fiddles he'll play a bad part !
Rob. But until that takes place I must be conscientious—
All. He'll be conscientious until that takes place.
Rob. Then adieu with good grace to my morals sententious
All. To morals sententious adieu with good grace !
Zoe. Who is the wretch who hath betrayed thee ?
Let him stand forth!

Rich. (*coming forward*). 'Twas I!
All. Die, traitor!
Rich. Hold, my conscience made me
Withhold your wrath!

SOLO.—RICHARD.

Within this breast there beats a heart
Whose voice can't be gainsaid.
It bade me thy true rank impart,
And I at once obeyed.
I knew 'twould blight thy budding fate—
I knew 'twould cause thee anguish great—
But did I therefore hesitate?
No! I at once obeyed!
All. Acclaim him who, when his true heart
Bade him young Robin's rank impart,
Immediately obeyed!

SOLO.—ROSE (*addressing* ROBIN).

Farewell!
Thou hadst my heart—
'Twas quickly won!
But now we part—
Thy face I shun!
Farewell!

Go bend the knee
At Vice's shrine,
Of life with me
All hope resign.
Farewell!
(*To Sir Despard.*) Take me—I am thy bride!
Hurrah!

BRIDESMAIDS.

Hail the Bridegroom—hail the Bride!
When the nuptial knot is tied;
Every day will bring some joy
That can never, never cloy!

Enter MARGARET, *who listens.*

Sir D. Excuse me, I'm a virtuous person now—
Rose. That's why I wed you!
Sir D. And I to Margaret must keep my vow!
Mar. Have I misread you?
Oh, joy! with newly kindled rapture warmed,
I kneel before you! [*Kneels.*
Sir D. I once disliked you; now that I've reformed,
How I adore you! [*They embrace.*

BRIDESMAIDS.

Hail the Bridegroom—hail the Bride!
When the nuptial knot is tied;

Every day will bring some joy
That can never, never cloy!

Rose. Richard, of him I love bereft,
Through thy design,
Thou art the only one that's left,
So I am thine! [*They embrace.*

BRIDESMAIDS.

Hail the Bridegroom—hail the Bride!
Let the nuptial knot be tied!

DUET.—ROSE AND RICHARD.

Oh, happy the lily
When kissed by the bee;
And, sipping tranquilly,
Quite happy is he;
And happy the filly
That neighs in her pride;
But happier than any
A pound to a penny,
A lover is, when he
Embraces his bride!

DUET.—SIR DESPARD AND MARGARET.

Oh, happy the flowers
That blossom in June,
And happy the bowers
That gain by the boon,
But happier by hours
The man of descent,
Who, folly regretting,
Is bent on forgetting
His bad baroneting,
And means to repent!

TRIO.—HANNAH, ADAM, AND ZORAH.

Oh, happy the blossom
That blooms on the lea,
Likewise the opossom
That sits on a tree,
But when you come across 'em,
They cannot compare,
With those who are treading
The dance at a wedding,
While people are spreading
The best of good fare!

SOLO.—ROBIN.

Oh, wretched the debtor
Who's signing the deed!
And wretched the letter
That no one can read!

But very much better
Their lot it must be
Than that of the person
I'm making this verse on,
Whose head there's a curse on—
Alluding to me!

Repeat Ensemble with Chorus.

DANCE.

[*At the end of the dance* ROBIN *falls senseless on the stage. Picture.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Picture Gallery in Ruddigore Castle. The walls are covered with full-length portraits of the Baronets of Ruddigore from the time of* JAMES I.—*the first being that of* SIR RUPERT, *alluded to in the legend; the last, that of the last deceased Baronet,* SIR RODERIC.

Enter ROBIN *and* ADAM, *melodramatically. They are greatly altered in appearance,* ROBIN *wearing the haggard aspect of a guilty roué;* ADAM, *that of the wicked steward to such a man.*

DUET.—ROBIN AND ADAM.

Rob. I once was as meek as a new-born lamb,
I'm now Sir Murgatroyd—ha! ha!
With greater precision,
(Without the elision)
Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd—ha! ha!

Adam. And I, who was once his *valley-de-sham*,
As steward I'm now employed—ha! ha!
The dickens may take him—
I'll never forsake him!
As steward I'm now employed—ha! ha!

Both. How dreadful when an innocent heart
Becomes, perforce, a bad young Bart.,
And still more hard on old Adam
His former faithful *valley-de-sham!*

Rob. This is a painful state of things, Old Adam!

Adam. Painful, indeed! Ah, my poor master, when I swore that, come what would, I would serve you in all things for ever I little thought to what a pass it would bring me! The confidential adviser to the greatest villain unhung! Now, sir, to business. What crime do you propose to commit to-day?

Rob. How should I know? As my confidential adviser, it's your duty to suggest something.

Adam. Sir, I loathe the life you are leading, but a good old man's oath is paramount, and I obey. Richard Dauntless is here with pretty Rose Maybud, to ask your consent to their marriage. Poison their beer.

Rob. No—not that—I know I'm a bad Bart., but I'm not as bad a Bart. as all that.

Adam. Well, there you are, you see! It's no use my making suggestions if you don't adopt them.

Rob. (*melodramatically*). How would it be, do you think, were I to lure him here with cunning wile—bind him with good stout rope to yonder post—and then, by making hideous faces at him, curdle the heart-blood in his arteries, and freeze the very marrow in his bones? How say you, Adam, is not the scheme well planned?

Adam. It would be simply rude—nothing more. But soft—they come!

ADAM *and* ROBIN *retire up as* RICHARD *and* ROSE *enter, preceded by* Chorus of Bridesmaids.

DUET.—RICHARD AND ROSE.

Rich. Happily coupled are we,
You see—
I am a jolly Jack Tar,
My star,
And you are the fairest,
The richest and rarest
Of innocent lasses, you are,
By far—
Of innocent lasses you are!
Fanned by a favouring gale,
You'll sail
Over life's treacherous sea
With me,
And as for bad weather,
We'll brave it together,
And you shall creep under my lee,
My wee!
And you shall creep under my lee!
For you are such a smart little craft—
Such a neat little, sweet little craft,
Such a bright little, tight little,
Slight little, light little,
Trim little, prim little craft!

Chorus. For she is such, etc.

Rose. My hopes will be blighted, I fear,
My dear;
In a month you'll be going to sea,
Quite free,
And all of my wishes
You'll throw to the fishes
As though they were never to be;
Poor me!
As though they were never to be,
And I shall be left all alone
To moan,
And weep at your cruel deceit,
Complete;
While you'll be asserting
Your freedom by flirting
With every woman you meet,
You cheat—
With every woman you meet!
Though I am such a smart little craft—
Such a neat little, sweet little craft.
Such a bright little, tight little,
Slight little, light little,
Trim little, prim little craft!

Chorus. Though she is such, etc.

Enter ROBIN.

Rob. Soho! pretty one—in my power at last, eh? Know ye not that I have those within my call who, at my lightest bidding, would immure ye in an uncomfortable dungeon? (*Calling.*) What ho! within there!

Rich. Hold—we are prepared for this. (*Producing a Union Jack.*) Here is a flag that none dare defy (*all kneel*), and while this glorious rag floats over Rose Maybud's head, the man does not live who would dare to lay unlicensed hand upon her!

Rob. Foiled—and by a Union Jack! But a time will come, and then——

Rose. Nay, let me plead with him. (*To* ROBIN.) Sir Ruthven, have pity. In my book of etiquette the case of a maiden about to be wedded to one who unexpectedly turns out to be a baronet with a curse on him, is not considered. Time was when you loved me madly. Prove that this was no selfish love by according your consent to my marriage with one who, if he be not you yourself, is the next best thing—your dearest friend!

BALLAD.—ROSE.

In bygone days I had thy love,
Thou hadst my heart.
But Fate, all human vows above,
Our lives did part!

By the old love thou hadst for me,
By the fond heart that beat for thee—
By joys that never now can be,
Grant thou my prayer!

All. (*kneeling*). Grant thou her prayer!

Rob. (*recit.*). Take her—I yield.
All. (*recit.*). Oh, rapture!
Chorus. Away to the parson we go—
Say we're solicitous very
That he will turn two into one—
Singing hey, derry down derry!
Rich. For she *is* such a smart little craft.
Rose. Such a neat little, sweet little craft—
Rich. Such a bright little—
Rose. Tight little—
Rich. Slight little—
Rose. Light little—
Both. Trim little, slim little craft!
Chorus. For she *is* such a smart little craft, etc.

[*Exeunt all but* ROBIN.

Rob. For a week I have fulfilled my accursed doom! I have duly committed a crime a-day! Not a great crime, I trust, but still in the eyes of one as strictly regulated as I used to be, a crime. But will my ghostly ancestors be satisfied with what I have done, or will they regard it as an unworthy subterfuge? (*Addressing Pictures.*) Oh, my forefathers, wallowers in blood, there came at last a day when, sick of crime, you, each and every, vowed to sin no more, and so, in agony, called welcome Death to free you from your cloying guiltiness. Let the sweet psalm of that repentant hour soften your long-dead hearts, and tune your souls to mercy on your poor posterity! (*Kneeling.*)

[*The stage darkens for a moment. It becomes light again, and the Pictures are seen to have become animated.*

CHORUS OF FAMILY PORTRAITS.

Painted emblems of a race,
All accurst in days of yore,
Each from his accustomed place
Steps into the world once more.

[*The Pictures step from their frames and march round the stage.*

Baronet of Ruddigore,
Last of our accursèd line,
Down upon the oaken floor—
Down upon those knees of thine.
Coward, poltroon, shaker, squeamer,
Blockhead, sluggard, dullard, dreamer,

Shirker, shuffler, crawler, creeper,
Sniffler, snuffler, wailer, weeper,
Earthworm, maggot, tadpole, weevil!
Set upon thy course of evil
Lest the King of Spectre-Land
Set on thee his grisly hand!

[*The spectre of* SIR RODERIC *descends from his frame.*

Sir Rod. By the curse upon our race—
Chorus. Dead and hearsèd
All accursèd!
Sir Rod. Each inheriting this place—
Chorus. Sorrows shake it!
Devil take it!
Sir Rod. Must, perforce, or yea or nay—
Chorus. Yea or naying
Be obeying!
Sir Rod. Do a deadly crime each day!
Chorus. Fire and Thunder,
We knocked under—
Some atrocious crime committed
Daily ere the world we quitted!
Sir Rod. Beware! beware! beware!
Rob. Gaunt vision, who art thou,
That thus, with icy glare
And stern relentless brow,
Appearest, who knows how?
Sir Rod. I am the spectre of the late
Sir Roderic Murgatroyd,
Who comes to warn thee that thy fate
Thou canst not now avoid.
Rob. Alas, poor ghost!
Sir Rod. The pity you
Express, for nothing goes:
We spectres are a jollier crew
Than you, perhaps, suppose!
Chorus. Yes! yes!
We spectres are a jollier crew
Than you, perhaps, suppose!
Ha! ha!

SONG.—SIR RODERIC.

When the night wind howls in the chimney cowls, and the bat in the moonlight flies,
And inky clouds, like funeral shrouds, sail over the midnight skies—
When the footpads quail at the night-bird's wail, and black dogs bay the moon,
Then is the spectre's holiday—then is the ghosts' high-noon!
Chorus. Ha! ha!
Then is the ghosts' high-noon!
As the sob of the breeze sweeps over the trees, and the mists lie low on the fen,
From grey tomb-stones are gathered the bones that once were women and men,

And away they go, with a mop and a mow, to the revel that ends too soon,
For cockcrow limits our holiday—the dead of the night's high-noon!
Chorus. Ha! ha!
The dead of the night's high-noon!

And then each ghost with his ladye-toast to their churchyard beds take flight.
With a kiss, perhaps, on her lantern chaps, and a grisly grim "good-night;"
Till the welcome knell of the midnight bell rings forth its jolliest tune,
And ushers our next high holiday—the dead of the night's high-noon!
Chorus. Ha! ha!
The dead of the night's high-noon!

Rob. I recognize you now—you are the picture that hangs at the end of the gallery.

Sir Rod. In a bad light. I am.

Rob. Are you considered a good likeness?

Sir Rod. Pretty well. Flattering.

Rob. Because, as a work of art you are poor.

Sir Rod. I am crude in colour, but I have only been painted ten years. In a couple of centuries I shall be an Old Master, and then you will be sorry you spoke lightly of me.

Rob. And may I ask why you have left your frames?

Sir Rod. It is our duty to see that our successors commit their daily crimes in a conscientious and workmanlike fashion. It is our duty to remind you that you are evading the conditions under which you are permitted to exist.

Rob. Really I don't know what you'd have. I've only been a bad baronet a week, and I've committed a crime punctually every day.

Sir Rod. Let us inquire into this. Monday?

Rob. Monday was a Bank Holiday.

Sir Rod. True. Tuesday?

Rob. On Tuesday I made a false income-tax return.

All. Ha! ha!

1*st Ghost.* That's nothing.

2*nd Ghost.* Nothing at all.

3*rd Ghost.* Everybody does that.

4*th Ghost.* It's expected of you.

Sir Rod. Wednesday?

Rob. (*melodramatically*). On Wednesday I forged a will

Sir Rod. Whose will?

Rob. My own.

Sir Rod. My good sir, you can't forge your own will!

Rob. Can't I, though! I like that! I *did!* Besides, if a man can't forge his own will, whose will can he forge?

1*st Ghost.* There's something in that.

2*nd Ghost.* Yes; it seems reasonable.

3*rd Ghost.* At first sight it does.

4*th Ghost.* Fallacy somewhere, I fancy!

Rob. A man can do what he likes with his own?

Sir Rod. I suppose he can.

Rob. Well, then, he can forge his own will, stoopid! On Thursday I shot a fox.

1*st Ghost.* Hear, hear!

Sir Rod. That's better. (*Addressing* Ghosts.) Pass the fox, I think? (*They assent.*) Yes, pass the fox. Friday?

Rob. On Friday I forged a cheque.

Sir Rod. Whose cheque?

Rob. Old Adam's.

Sir Rod. But old Adam hasn't a banker.

Rob. I didn't say I forged his banker—I said I forged his cheque. On Saturday I disinherited my only son.

Sir Rod. But you haven't got a son.

Rob. No—not yet. I disinherited him in advance, to save time. You see—by this arrangement—he'll be born ready disinherited.

Sir Rod. I see. But I don't think you can do that.

Rob. My good sir, if I can't disinherit my own unborn son, whose unborn son can I disinherit?

Sir Rod. Humph! These arguments sound very well, but I can't help thinking that, if they were reduced to syllogistic form, they wouldn't hold water. Now quite understand us. We are foggy, but we don't permit our fogginess to be presumed upon. Unless you undertake to—well, suppose we say, carry off a lady? (*Addressing* Ghosts.) Those who are in favour of his carrying off a lady—— (*All hold up their hands except a* Bishop.) Those of the contrary opinion? (Bishop *holds up his hands.*) Oh, you're never satisfied! Yes, unless you undertake to carry off a lady at once—I don't care what lady—any lady—choose your lady—you perish in inconceivable agonies.

Rob. Carry off a lady? Certainly not, on any account. I've the greatest respect for ladies, and I wouldn't do anything of the kind for worlds! No, no. I'm not that kind of baronet I assure you! If that's all you've got to say, you'd better go back to your frames.

Sir Rod. Very good—then let the agonies commence.

[Ghosts *make passes.* ROBIN *begins to writhe in agony.*

Rob. Oh! Oh! Don't do that! I can't stand it!

Sir Rod. Painful, isn't it? It gets worse by degrees.

Rob. Oh! Oh! Stop a bit! Stop it, will you? I want to speak.

[SIR RODERIC *makes signs to* Ghosts, *who resume their attitudes.*

Sir Rod. Better?

Rob. Yes—better now! Whew!

Sir Rod. Well, do you consent?

Rob. But it's such an ungentlemanly thing to do!

Sir Rod. As you please. (*To* Ghosts.) Carry on!

Rob. Stop—I can't stand it! I agree! I promise! It shall be done!

Sir Rod. To-day?

Rob. To-day!

Sir Rod. At once?

Rob. At once! I retract! I apologize! I had no idea it was anything like that!

CHORUS.

He yields! He answers to our call!
We do not ask for more.
A sturdy fellow, after all,
This latest Ruddigore!
All perish in unheard-of woe
Who dare our wills defy;
We want your pardon, ere we go,
For having agonized you so—
So pardon us—
So pardon us—
So pardon us—
Or die!

Rob. I pardon you!
I pardon you!
All. He pardons us—
Hurrah!

[*The* Ghosts *return to their frames.*

Chorus. Painted emblems of a race,
All accurst in days of yore,
Each to his accustomed place
Steps unwillingly, once more!

[*By this time the* Ghosts *have changed to pictures again.* ROBIN *is overcome by emotion.*

Enter ADAM.

Adam. My poor master, you are not well——

Rob. Gideon Crawle, it won't do—I've seen 'em—all my ancestors—they're just gone. They say that I must do some-

thing desperate at once, or perish in horrible agonies. Go—go to yonder village—carry off a maiden—bring her here at once—any one—I don't care which——

Adam. But——

Rob. Not a word, but obey! Fly! [*Exit* ADAM.

RECITATIVE AND SONG.—ROBIN.

Away, Remorse!
Compunction, hence!
Go, Moral Force!
Go, Penitence!
To Virtue's plea
A long farewell—
Propriety,
I ring your knell!
Come guiltiness of deadliest hue,
Come desperate deeds of derring do!

Henceforth all the crimes that I find in the *Times*
I've promised to perpetrate daily;
To-morrow I start, with a petrified heart,
On a regular course of Old Bailey.
There's confidence tricking, bad coin, pocket-picking,
And several other disgraces—
There's postage-stamp prigging, and then, thimble-rigging,
The three-card delusion at races!
Oh! a Baronet's rank is exceedingly nice,
But the title's uncommonly dear at the price!

Ye well-to-do squires, who live in the shires,
Where petty distinctions are vital,
Who found Athenæums and local museums,
With views to a baronet's title—
Ye butchers and bakers and candlestick makers
Who sneer at all things that are tradey—
Whose middle-class lives are embarrassed by wives
Who long to parade as "My Lady,"
Oh! allow me to offer a word of advice,
The title's uncommonly dear at the price!

Ye supple M.P.'s, who go down on your knees,
Your precious identity sinking,
And vote black or white as your leaders indite
(Which saves you the trouble of thinking),
For your country's good fame, her repute, or her shame,
You don't care the snuff of a candle—
But you're paid for your game when you're told that your name
Will be graced by a baronet's handle—
Oh! allow me to give *you* a word of advice—
The title's uncommonly dear at the price!

[*Exit* ROBIN.

Enter SIR DESPARD *and* MARGARET. *They are both dressed in sober black of formal cut, and present a strong contrast to their appearance in Act I.*

DUET.

Des. I once was a very abandoned person—
Mar. Making the most of evil chances.
Des. Nobody could conceive a worse 'un—
Mar. Even in all the old romances.
Des. I blush for my wild extravagances,
But be so kind
To bear in mind,
Mar. We were the victims of circumstances! [*Dance.*
That is one of our blameless dances.

Mar. I was an exceedingly odd young lady—
Des. Suffering much from spleen and vapours.
Mar. Clergymen thought my conduct shady—
Des. She didn't spend much upon linen-drapers.
Mar. It certainly entertained the gapers.
My ways were strange
Beyond all range—
Des. And paragraphs got into all the papers. [*Dance.*
Des. We only cut respectable capers.
Des. I've given up all my wild proceedings.

Mar. My taste for a wandering life is waning.
Des. Now I'm a dab at penny-readings.
Mar. They are not remarkably entertaining.
Des. A moderate livelihood we're gaining.
Mar. In fact we rule
A National School.
Des. The duties are dull, but I'm not complaining, [*Dance.*
This sort of thing takes a deal of training!

Des. We have been married a week.

Mar. One happy, happy week!

Des. Our new life——

Mar. Is delightful indeed!

Des. So calm!

Mar. So unimpassioned! (*Wildly.*) Master, all this I owe to you! See, I am no longer wild and untidy. My hair is combed. My face is washed. My boots fit!

Des. Margaret, don't. Pray restrain yourself. Remember, you are now a district visitor.

Mar. A gentle district visitor!

Des. You are orderly, methodical, neat; you have your emotions well under control.

Mar. I have! (*Wildly.*) Master, when I think of all you have done for me, I fall at your feet. I embrace your ankles. I hug your knees! (*Doing so.*)

Des. Hush. This is not well. This is calculated to provoke remark. Be composed, I beg!

Mar. Ah! you are angry with poor little Mad Margaret!

Des. No, not angry; but a district visitor should learn to eschew melodrama. Visit the poor, by all means, and giv them tea and barley-water, but don't do it as if you were ad ministering a bowl of deadly nightshade. It upsets them. Then, when you nurse sick people, and find them not as well as could be expected, why go into hysterics?

Mar. Why not?

Des. Because it's too jumpy for a sick-room.

Mar. How strange! Oh, Master! Master!—how shall I express the all-absorbing gratitude that—— (*About to throw herself at his feet.*)

Des. Now! (*Warningly.*)

Mar. Yes, I know, dear—it shan't occur again. (*He is seated —she sits on the ground by him.*) Shall I tell you one of poor Mad Margaret's odd thoughts? Well, then, when I am lying awake at night, and the pale moonlight streams through the latticed casement, strange fancies crowd upon my poor mad brain, and I sometimes think that if we could hit upon some word for you to use whenever I am about to relapse—some word that teems with hidden meaning—like "Basingstoke" it might recall me to my saner self. For, after all, I am only Mad Margaret! Daft Meg! Poor Meg! He! he! he!

Des. Poor child, she wanders! But soft—some one comes. Margaret, pray recollect yourself—Basingstoke, I beg! Margaret, if you don't Basingstoke at once, I shall be seriously angry.

Mar. (*recovering herself*). Basingstoke it is!

Des. Then make it so.

Enter ROBIN. *He starts on seeing them.*

Rob. Despard! And his young wife! This visit is unexpected.

Mar. Shall I fly at him? Shall I tear him limb from limb? Shall I rend him asunder? Say but the word, and——

Des. Basingstoke!

Mar. (*suddenly demure*). Basingstoke it is!

Des. (*aside*). Then make it so. (*Aloud.*) My brother—I call you brother still, despite your horrible profligacy—we have come to urge you to abandon the evil courses to which you have committed yourself, and at any cost to become a pure and blameless ratepayer.

Rob. But I've done no wrong yet.

Mar. (*wildly*). No wrong! He has done no wrong! Did you hear that!

Des. Basingstoke.

Mar. (*recovering herself*) Basingstoke it is.

Des. My brother—I still call you brother, you observe—you forget that you have been, in the eye of the law, a Bad Baronet of Ruddigore for ten years—and you are therefore responsible—in the eye of the law—for all the misdeeds committed by the unhappy gentleman who occupied your place.

Rob. I see! Bless my heart, I never thought of that! Was I very bad?

Des. Awful. Wasn't he? (*To* MARGARET.)

Rob. And I've been going on like this for how long?

Des. Ten years! Think of all the atrocities you have committed—by attorney as it were—during that period. Remember how you trifled with this poor child's affections—how you raised her hopes on high (don't cry, my love—Basingstoke, you know), only to trample them in the dust when they were at the very zenith of their fulness. Oh, fie, sir, fie—she trusted you!

Rob. Did she? What a scoundrel I must have been! There, there—don't cry, my dear (*to* MARGARET, *who is sobbing on* ROBIN'S *breast*), it's all right now. Birmingham you know—Birmingham——

Mar. (*sobbing*). It's Ba—Ba—Basingstoke!

Rob. Basingstoke! of course it is—Basingstoke.

Mar. Then make it so!

Rob. There, there—it's all right—he's married you now—that is, *I've* married you. (*Turning to* DESPARD.) I say, which of us has married her?

Des. Oh, *I've* married her.

Rob. (*aside*). Oh, I'm glad of that. (*To* MARGARET.) Yes, *he's* married you now (*passing her over to* DESPARD), and anything more disreputable than my conduct seems to have been I've never even heard of. But my mind is made up—I *will* defy my ancestors. I *will* refuse to obey their behests, thus, by courting death, atone in some degree for the infamy of my career!

Mar. I knew it—I knew it. God bless you. (*Hysterically.*)

Des. Basingstoke!

Mar. Basingstoke it is! (*Recovers herself.*)

PATTER-TRIO.

ROBIN, DESPARD AND MARGARET.

Rob. My eyes are fully open to my awful situation—
I shall go at once to Roderic and make him an oration.

I shall tell him I've recovered my forgotten moral senses,
And I don't care twopence halfpenny for any consequences.
Now, I do not want to perish by the sword or by the dagger,
But a martyr may indulge a little pardonable swagger,
And a word or two of compliment my vanity would flatter,
But I've got to die to-morrow, so it really doesn't matter!

Des. So it really doesn't matter—
Mar. So it really doesn't matter—
All. So it really doesn't matter, matter, matter, matter, matter!

Mar. If I were not a little mad and generally silly,
I should give you my advice upon the subject, willy nilly;
I should show you in a moment how to grapple with the question
And you'd really be astonished at the force of my suggestion.
On the subject I shall write you a most valuable letter,
Full of excellent suggestions when I feel a little better,
But at present I'm afraid I am as mad as any hatter,
So I'll keep 'em to myself, for my opinion doesn't matter!

Des. Her opinion doesn't matter—
Rob. Her opinion doesn't matter—
All. Her opinion doesn't matter, matter, matter, matter, matter!

Des. If I had been so lucky as to have a steady brother
Who could talk to me as we are talking now to one another—
Who could give me good advice when he discovered I was erring,
(Which is just the very favour which on you I am conferring)
My story would have made a rather interesting idyll,
And I might have lived and died a very decent indiwiddle.
This particularly rapid, unintelligible patter
Isn't generally heard, and if it is it doesn't matter!

Rob. If it is it doesn't matter—
Mar. If it ain't it doesn't matter—
All. If it is it doesn't matter, matter, matter, matter, matter!

[*Exeunt* DESPARD *and* MARGARET

Enter ADAM.

Adam (*guiltily*). Master—the deed is done!

Rob. What deed?

Adam. She is here—alone, unprotected.

Rob. Who?

Adam. The maiden. I've carried her off—I had a hard task for she fought like a tiger-cat!

Rob. Great Heaven, I had forgotten her! I had hoped t have died unspotted by crime, but I am foiled again—and by tiger-cat! Produce her—and leave us!

[ADAM *introduces* OLD HANNAH, *very much excited, an exit.*

Rob. Dame Hannah! This is—this is not what I expected

Ham. Well, sir, and what would you with me? Oh, yo have begun bravely—bravely indeed! Unappalled by the cal

dignity of blameless womanhood, your minion has torn me from my spotless home, and dragged me, blindfold and shrieking, through hedges, over stiles, and across a very difficult country, and left me, helpless and trembling, at your mercy! Yet not helpless, coward sir, for, approach one step—nay, but the twentieth part of one poor inch—and this poniard (*produces a very small dagger*) shall teach ye what it is to lay unholy hands on old Stephen Trusty's daughter!

Rob. Madam, I am extremely sorry for this. It is not at all what I intended—anything more correct—more deeply respectful than my intentions towards you, it would be impossible for any one—however particular—to desire.

Han. Bah, I am not to be tricked by smooth words, hypocrite! But be warned in time, for there are without, a hundred gallant hearts whose trusty blades would hack him limb from limb who dared to lay unholy hands on old Stephen Trusty's daughter!

Rob. And this is what it is to embark upon a career of unlicensed pleasure!

[HANNAH, *who has taken a formidable dagger from one of the armed figures, throws her small dagger to* ROBIN.

Han. Harkye, miscreant, you have secured me, and I am your poor prisoner; but if you think I cannot take care of myself you are very much mistaken. Now then, it's one to one, and let the best man win! (*Making for him.*)

Rob. (*in an agony of terror*). Don't! don't look at me like that! I can't bear it! Roderic! Uncle! Save me!

RODERIC *enters, up trap in centre of stage. He is visible only as far as the waist.*

Rod. What is the matter? Have you carried her off?

Rob. I have—she is there—look at her—she terrifies me Come quite up and save me!

Rod. (*looking at* HANNAH). Little Nannikin!

Han. (*amazed.*) Roddy-doddy!

Rod. My own old love! (*Comes completely through trap.*) Why, how came *you* here?

Han. This brute—he carried me off! Bodily! But I'll show him! (*About to rush at* ROBIN.)

Rod. Stop! (*To* ROB.) What do you mean by carrying off this lady? Are you aware that, once upon a time she was engaged to be married to me? I'm very angry—very angry indeed.

Rob. Now, I hope this will be a lesson to you in future, not to——

Rod. Hold your tongue, sir.

Rob. Yes, uncle.

Rod. Have you given him any encouragement?

Han. (*to* Rob). Have I given you any encouragement? Frankly now, have I?

Rob. No. Frankly, you have not. Anything more scrupulously correct than your conduct it would be impossible to desire.

Rod. You go away.

Rob. Yes, uncle. [*Exit* Robin.

Rod. This is a strange meeting after so many years!

Han. Very. I thought you were dead.

Rod. I am. I died ten years ago.

Han. And are you pretty comfortable?

Rod. Pretty well—that is—yes, pretty well.

Han. You don't deserve to be, for I loved you all the while, dear; and it made me dreadfully unhappy to hear of all your goings on, you bad, bad boy!

Ballad.—Hannah.

There grew a little flower
'Neath a great oak tree:
When the tempest 'gan to lower
Little heeded she:
No need had she to cower,
For she dreaded not its power—
She was happy in the bower
Of her great oak tree!
Sing hey,
Lackaday!
Let the tears fall free
For the pretty little flower and the great oak tree!

Both. Sing hey,
Lackaday! etc.

When she found that he was fickle,
Was that great oak tree,
She was in a pretty pickle,
As she well might be—
But his gallantries were mickle
For Death followed with his sickle,
And her tears began to trickle
For her great oak tree!
Sing hey,
Lackaday! etc.

Said she, "He loved me never,
Did that great oak tree,
But I'm neither rich nor clever,
And so why should he?

But though fate our fortunes sever
To be constant I'll endeavour,
Ay, for ever and for ever,
To my great oak tree!"
Sing hey,
Lackaday! etc.

[*Falls weeping on* RODERIC'S *bosom.*

Enter ROBIN, *excitedly, followed by all the characters and* Chorus of Bridesmaids.

Rob. Stop a bit—both of you.

Rod. This intrusion is unmannerly.

Han. I'm surprised at you.

Rob. I can't stop to apologize—an idea has just occurred to me. A Baronet of Ruddigore can only die through refusing to commit his daily crime.

Rod. No doubt.

Rob. Therefore, to refuse to commit a daily crime is tantamount to suicide!

Rod. It would seem so.

Rob. But suicide is, itself, a crime—and so, by your own showing, you ought never to have died at all!

Rod. I see—I understand! Then I'm practically alive!

Rob. Undoubtedly! (SIR RODERIC *embraces* HANNAH.) Rose, when you believed that I was a simple farmer, I believe you loved me?

Rose. Madly, passionately!

Rob. But when I became a bad baronet, you very properly loved Richard instead?

Rose. Passionately, madly!

Rob. But if I should turn out *not* to be a bad baronet after all, how would you love me then?

Rose. Madly, passionately!

Rob. As before?

Rose. Why, of course!

Rob. My darling! (*They embrace.*)

Rich. Here, I say, belay.

Rose. Oh, sir, belay, if it's absolutely necessary.

Rob. Belay? Certainly not!

FINALE.

Rob. Having been a wicked baronet a week,
Once again a modest livelihood I seek,
Agricultural employment
Is to me a keen enjoyment,
For I'm naturally diffident and meek!

Rose. When a man has been a naughty baronet,
And expresses his repentance and regret,
You should help him if you're able,
Like the mousie in the fable.
That's the teaching of my Book of Etiquette.

Rich. If you ask me why I do not pipe my eye,
Like an honest British sailor, I reply,
That with Zorah for my missis,
There'll be bread and cheese and kisses,
Which is just the sort of ration I enjye!

Des. and Mar. Prompted by a keen desire to evoke,
All the blessed calm of matrimony's yoke,
We shall toddle off to-morrow,
From this scene of sin and sorrow,
For to settle in the town of Basingstoke!

All. For happy the lily
That's kissed by the bee;
And, sipping tranquilly,
Quite happy is he;
And happy the filly
That neighs in her pride;
But happier than any,
A pound to a penny,
A lover is, when he
Embraces his bride!

CURTAIN.

THE

YEOMEN OF THE GUARD;

OR,

THE MERRYMAN AND HIS MAID.

A NEW AND ORIGINAL OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

First produced at the Savoy Theatre, London, under the management of MR. R. D'OYLY CARTE, *on Wednesday, October 3rd,* 1888.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Richard Cholmondeley, *Lieutenant of the Tower*	Mr. W. Brownlow.
Colonel Fairfax (*under sentence of death*)	Mr. Courtice Pounds.
Sergeant Meryll, *of the Yeomen of the Guard*	Mr. Richard Temple.
Leonard Meryll, *his Son*	Mr. W. R. Shirley.
Jack Point, *a Strolling Jester*	Mr. George Grossmith
Wilfred Shadbolt, *Head Jailor and Assistant Tormentor*	Mr. W. H. Denny.
The Headsman	Mr. Richards.
First Yeoman	Mr. Wilbraham.
Second Yeoman	Mr. Medcalf.
Third Yeoman	Mr. Merton.
Fourth Yeoman	Mr. Rudolf Lewis.
First Citizen	Mr. Redmond.
Second Citizen	Mr. Boyd.
Elsie Maynard, *a Strolling Singer* ...	Miss Geraldine Ulmar.
Phœbe Meryll, *Sergeant Meryll's Daughter*	Miss Jessie Bond.
Dame Carruthers, *Housekeeper to the Tower*	Miss Rosina Brandram.
Kate, *her Niece*	Miss Rose Hervey.

Chorus of Yeomen of the Guard, Gentlemen, Citizens, etc.

SCENE—TOWER GREEN.

Date—16th Century.

THE

YEOMEN OF THE GUARD;

OR, THE

MERRYMAN AND HIS MAID.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Tower Green.* PHŒBE *discovered spinning.*

SONG.—PHŒBE.

When maiden loves, she sits and sighs,
She wanders to and fro;
Unbidden tear-drops fill her eyes,
And to all questions she replies,
With a sad heigho!
'Tis but a little word—"heigho!"
So soft, 'tis scarcely heard—"heigho!"
An idle breath—
Yet life and death
May hang upon a maid's "heigho!"

When maiden loves, she mopes apart,
As owl mopes on a tree;
Although she keenly feels the smart,
She cannot tell what ails her heart,
With its sad "Ah me!"
'Tis but a foolish sigh—"Ah me!"
Born but to droop and die—"Ah me!"
Yet all the sense
Of eloquence
Lies hidden in a maid's "Ah me!" [*Weeps.*

Enter WILFRED.

Wil. Mistress Meryll!

Phœ. (*looking up*). Eh! Oh! it's you, is it! You may go away, if you like. Because I don't want you, you know.

Wil. Haven't you anything to say to me?

Phœ. Oh yes! Are the birds all caged? The wild beasts all littered down? All the locks, chains, bolts, and bars in good order? Is the Little Ease sufficiently uncomfortable? The racks, pincers, and thumbscrews all ready for work? Ugh! you brute!

Wil. These allusions to my professional duties are in doubtful taste. I didn't become a head-jailor because I like head-jailing. I didn't become an assistant-tormentor because I like assistant-tormenting. We can't *all* be sorcerers, you know. (PHŒBE *annoyed.*) Ah! you brought that upon yourself.

Phœ. Colonel Fairfax is *not* a sorcerer. He's a man of science and an alchemist.

Wil. Well, whatever he is, he won't be one long, for he's to be beheaded to-day for dealings with the devil. His master nearly had him last night, when the fire broke out in the Beauchamp Tower.

Phœ. Oh, how I wish he had escaped in the confusion! But take care; there's still time for a reply to his petition for mercy.

Wil. Ah! I'm content to chance that. This evening at half-past seven—ah!

Phœ. You're a cruel monster to speak so unfeelingly of the death of a young and handsome soldier.

Wil. Young and handsome! How do *you* know he's young and handsome?

Phœ. Because I've seen him every day for weeks past taking his exercise on the Beauchamp Tower. (WILFRED *utters a cry of agony.*) There, I believe you're jealous of *him*, now. Jealous of a man I've never spoken to! Jealous of a poor soul who's to die in an hour!

Wil. I am! I'm jealous of everybody and everything. I'm jealous of the very words I speak to you—because they reach your ears—and I mustn't go near 'em!

Phœ. How unjust you are! Jealous of the words you speak to me! Why, you know as well as I do, that I don't even like them.

Wil. You used to like 'em.

Phœ. I used to *pretend* I liked them. It was mere politeness to comparative strangers. [*Exit* PHŒBE, *with spinning wheel.*

Wil. I don't believe you know what jealousy is! I don't believe you know how it eats into a man's heart—and disorders his digestion—and turns his interior into boiling lead. Oh, you are a heartless jade to trifle with the delicate organization of the human interior!

Enter Crowd of Men *and* Women, *followed by* Yeomen of the Guard, *led by* SERGEANT MERYLL.

CHORUS (*as Yeomen march on*).

Tower Warders,
Under orders,
Gallant pikemen, valiant swordersl
Brave in bearing,
Foemen scaring,
In their bygone days of daring!
Ne'er a stranger
There to danger—
Each was o'er the world a ranger:
To the story
Of our glory
Each a bold contributory!

CHORUS OF YEOMEN.

In the autumn of our life
Here at rest in ample clover,
We rejoice in telling over
Our impetuous May and June.
In the evening of our day,
With the sun of life declining,
We recall without repining,
All the heat of bygone noon.

SOLO.—SERGEANT.

This the autumn of our life,
This the evening of our day;
Weary we of battle strife,
Weary we of mortal fray.
But our year is not so spent,
And our days are not so faded,
But that we with one consent,
Were our loved land invaded,
Still would face a foreign foe,
As in days of long ago.

PEOPLE. YEOMEN.
Tower Warders, In the autumn time of life, etc.
Under orders, etc.

[*Exeunt* Crowd. *Manent* Yeomen.

Enter DAME CARRUTHERS.

Dame. A good day to you, Sergeant.

Serg. Good day, Dame Carruthers. Busy to-day?

Dame. Busy, ay! The fire in the Beauchamp last night has given me work enough. A dozen poor prisoners—Richard Colfax, Sir Martin Byfleet, Colonel Fairfax, Warren the preacher-poet, and half a score others—all packed into one

small cell, not six feet square. Poor Colonel Fairfax, who's to die to-day, is to be removed to No. 14 in the Cold Harbour Tower that he may have his last hour alone with his confessor; and I've to see to that.

Serg. Poor gentleman! He'll die bravely. I fought under him two years since, and he valued his life as it were a feather!

Phœ. He's the bravest, the handsomest, and the best young gentleman in England! He twice saved my father's life; and it's a cruel thing, a wicked thing, and a barbarous thing that so gallant a hero should lose his head—for it's the handsomest head in England!

Dame. For dealings with the devil. Ay! if all were beheaded who dealt with *him*, there'd be busy doings on Tower Green.

Phœ. You know very well that Colonel Fairfax is a student of alchemy—nothing more, and nothing less; but this wicked Tower, like a cruel giant in a fairy-tale, must be fed with blood, and that blood must be the best and bravest in England, or it's not good enough for the old Blunderbore. Ugh!

Dame. Silence, you silly girl; you know not what you say. I was born in the old keep, and I've grown grey in it, and, please God, I shall die and be buried in it; and there's not a stone in its walls that is not as dear to me as my own right hand.

SONG.—DAME CARRUTHERS.

When our gallant Norman foes
Made our merry land their own,
And the Saxons from the Conqueror were flying,
At his bidding it arose,
In its panoply of stone,
A sentinel unliving and undying.
Insensible, I trow,
As a sentinel should be,
Though a queen to save her head should come a-suing.
There's a legend on its brow
That is eloquent to me,
And it tells of duty done and duty doing.
"The screw may twist and the rack may turn,
And men may bleed and men may burn,
On London town and all its hoard
I keep my solemn watch and ward!"

Chorus. The screw may twist, etc.

Within its wall of rock
The flower of the brave
Have perished with a constancy unshaken.
From the dungeon to the block,
From the scaffold to the grave,
Is a journey many gallant hearts have taken.

And the wicked flames may hiss
Round the heroes who have fought
For conscience and for home in all its beauty;
But the grim old fortalice
Takes little heed of aught
That comes not in the measure of its duty.

"The screw may twist and the rack may turn,
And men may bleed and men may burn,
On London town and all its hoard
It keeps its silent watch and ward!"

[*Exeunt all but* PHŒBE *and* SERGEANT MERYLL.

Phœ. Father! No reprieve for the poor gentleman?

Mer. No, my lass; but there's one hope yet. Thy brother Leonard, who, as a reward for his valour in saving his standard and cutting his way through fifty foes who would have hanged him, has been appointed a Yeoman of the Guard, will arrive this morning; and as he comes straight from Windsor, where the Court is, it may be—it *may* be—that he will bring the expected reprieve with him.

Phœ. Oh, that he may!

Mer. Amen! For the Colonel twice saved my life, and I'd give the rest of my life to save his! And wilt thou not be glad to welcome thy brave brother, with the fame of whose exploits all England is a-ringing?

Phœ. Ay, truly, if he brings the reprieve.

Mer. And not otherwise?

Phœ. Well, he's a brave fellow indeed, and I love brave men.

Mer. *All* brave men?

Phœ. Most of them, I verily believe! But I hope Leonard will not be too strict with me—they say he is a very dragon of virtue and circumspection! Now, my dear old father is kindness itself, and——

Mer. And leaves thee pretty well to thine own ways, eh? Well, I've no fears for thee; thou hast a feather-brain, but thou'rt a good lass.

Phœ. Yes, that's all very true, but if Leonard is going to tell me that I may not do this and I may not do that, and I must not talk to this one, or walk with that one, but go through the world with my lips pursed up and my eyes cast down, like a poor nun who has renounced mankind—why, as I have *not* renounced mankind, and don't mean to renounce mankind, I won't have it—there!

Mer. Nay, he'll not check thee more than is good for thee, Phœbe!

Enter LEONARD MERYLL.

Leon. Father!

Mer. Leonard! my brave boy! I'm right glad to see thee, and so is Phœbe!

Phœ. Ay—hast thou brought Colonel Fairfax's reprieve?

Leon. Nay, I have here a despatch for the Lieutenant, but no reprieve for the Colonel!

Phœ. Poor gentleman! poor gentleman!

Leon. Ay, I would I had brought better news. I'd give my right hand—nay, my body—my life, to save his!

Mer. Dost thou speak in earnest, my lad?

Leon. Ay—I'm no braggart. Did he not save thy life? and am I not his foster-brother?

Mer. Then hearken to me. Thou hast come to join the Yeomen of the Guard.

Leon. Well!

Mer. None has seen thee but ourselves?

Leon. And a sentry, who took but scant notice of me.

Mer. Now to prove thy words. Give me the despatch, and get thee hence at once! Here is money, and I'll send thee more. Lie hidden for a space, and let no one know. I'll convey a suit of yeoman's uniform to the Colonel's cell—he shall shave off his beard so that none shall know him, and I'll own him as my son, the brave Leonard Meryll, who saved his flag and cut his way through fifty foes who thirsted for his life. He will be welcomed without question by my brother-yeomen, I'll warrant that. Now, how to get access to his cell? (*To* PHŒBE.) The key is with thy sour-faced admirer, Wilfred Shadbolt.

Phœ. (*demurely*). I think—I say, I *think*—I can get anything I want from Wilfred. I think—I say, I *think*—you may leave that to me.

Mer. Then get thee hence at once, lad—and bless thee for this sacrifice.

Phœ. And take my blessing too, dear, dear Leonard!

Leon. And thine, eh? Humph! Thy love is new-born, wrap it up, lest it take cold and die.

TRIO.—LEONARD, PHŒBE, MERYLL.

Phœ. Alas! I waver to and fro—
Dark danger hangs upon the deed!

All. Dark danger hangs upon the deed!

Leon. The scheme is rash and well may fail;
But ours are not the hearts that quail—
The hands that shrink—the cheeks that pale
In hours of need!

All. No, ours are not the hearts that quail,
The hands that shrink, the cheeks that pale
In hours of need!

Mer. The air I breathe to him I owe:
My life is his—I count it naught!
That life is his—so count it naught!

Leon. And shall I reckon risks I run
When services are to be done
To save the life of such an one?
Unworthy thought!

All. And shall we reckon risks we run
To save the life of such an one?
Unworthy thought!

Phœ. We may succeed—who can foretell—
May Heaven help our hope—farewell!

All. We may succeed—who can foretell?
May Heaven help our hope—farewell!

[LEONARD *embraces* MERYLL *and* PHŒBE, *and then exit.* PHŒBE *weeping.*

Mer. Nay, lass, be of good cheer, we may save him yet.

Phœ. Oh, see, father—they bring the poor gentleman from the Beauchamp! Oh, father! his hour is not yet come?

Mer. No, no—they lead him to the Cold Harbour Tower to await his end in solitude. But softly—the Lieutenant approaches! He should not see thee weep.

Enter FAIRFAX, *guarded.* *The* LIEUTENANT *enters, meeting him.*

Lieut. Halt! Colonel Fairfax, my old friend, we meet but sadly.

Fair. Sir, I greet you with all good-will; and I thank you for the zealous care with which you have guarded me from the pestilent dangers which threaten human life outside. In this happy little community, Death, when he comes, doth so in punctual and business-like fashion; and, like a courtly gentleman, giveth due notice of his advent, that one may not be taken unawares.

Lieut. Sir, you bare this bravely, as a brave man should.

Fair. Why, sir, it is no light boon to die swiftly and surely at a given hour and in a given fashion! Truth to tell, I would gladly have my life; but if that may not be, I have the next best thing to it, which is death. Believe me, sir, my lot is not so much amiss!

Phœ. (*aside to* MERYLL). Oh, father, father, I cannot bear it?

Mer. My poor lass!

Fair. Nay, pretty one, why weepest thou? Come, be comforted. Such a life as mine is not worth weeping for. (*See* MERYLL.) Sergeant Meryll, is it not? (*To* LIEUTENANT.) May I greet my old friend? (*Shakes* MERYLL'S *hand.*) Why, man, what's all this? Thou and I have faced the grim old king a dozen times, and never has his majesty come to me in such goodly fashion. Keep a stout heart, good fellow—we are soldiers, and we know how to die, thou and I. Take my word for it, it is easier to die well than to live well—for, in sooth, I have tried both.

BALLAD.—FAIRFAX.

Is life a boon?
If so, it must befal
That Death, whene'er he call,
Must call too soon.
Though fourscore years he give,
Yet one would pray to live
Another moon!
What kind of plaint have I,
Who perish in July?
I might have had to die,
Perchance, in June!

Is life a thorn?
Then count it not a whit!
Man is well done with it;
Soon as he's born
He should all means essay
To put the plague away;
And I, war-worn,
Poor captured fugitive,
My life most gladly give—
I might have had to live
Another morn!

[*At the end* PHŒBE *is led off, weeping, by* MERYLL.

Fair. And now, Sir Richard, I have a boon to beg. I am in this strait for no better reason than because my kinsman Sir Clarence Poltwhistle, one of the Secretaries of State, has charged me with sorcery, in order that he may succeed to my estate, which devolves to him provided I die unmarried.

Lieut. As thou wilt most surely do.

Fair. Nay, as I will most surely *not* do, by your worship's grace! I have a mind to thwart this good cousin of mine.

Lieut. How?

Fair. By marrying forthwith, to be sure!

Lieut. But, Heaven ha' mercy, whom wouldst thou marry?

Fair. Nay, I am indifferent on that score. Coming Death hath made of me a true and chivalrous knight, who holds a

womankind in such esteem that the oldest, and the meanest, and the worst-favoured of them is good enough for him. So, my good Lieutenant, if thou wouldst serve a poor soldier who has but an hour to live, find me the first that comes—my confessor shall marry us, and her dower shall be my dishonoured name and a hundred crowns to boot. No such poor dower for an hour of matrimony!

Lieut. A strange request. I doubt that I should be warranted in granting it.

Fair. Tut tut! There never was a marriage fraught with so little of evil to the contracting parties. In an hour she'll be a widow, and I—a bachelor again for aught I know!

Lieut. Well, I will see what can be done, for I hold thy kinsman in abhorrence for the scurvy trick he has played thee.

Fair. A thousand thanks, good sir; we meet again on this spot in an hour or so. I shall be a bridegroom then, and your worship will wish me joy. Till then farewell. (*To guard.*) I am ready, good fellows.

[*Exit with guard into Cold Harbour Tower.*

Lieut. He is a brave fellow, and it is a pity that he should die. Now, how to find him a bride at such short notice? Well, the task should be easy! [*Exit.*

Enter JACK POINT *and* ELSIE MAYNARD, *pursued by a crowd of* MEN and WOMEN. POINT *and* ELSIE *are much terrified*; POINT *however, assuming an appearance of self-possession.*

CHORUS.

Here's a man of jollity,
Jibe, joke, jollify!
Give us of your quality,
Come, fool, follify!

If you vapour vapidly,
River runneth rapidly,
Into it we fling
Bird who doesn't sing!

Give us an experiment
In the art of merriment;
Into it we throw
Cock who doesn't crow!

Banish your timidity,
And with all rapidity
Give us quip and quiddity—
Willy-nilly, O!

River none can mollify;—
Into it we throw
Fool who doesn't follify,
Cock who doesn't crow!

Point (*alarmed*). My masters, I pray you bear with us, and we will satisfy you, for we are merry folk who would make all merry as ourselves. For, look you, there is humour in all things, and the truest philosophy is that which teaches us to find it and to make the most of it.

Elsie (*struggling with one of the crowd*). Hands off, I say, unmannerly fellow! (*Pushing him away.*)

Point (*to 1st Citizen*). Ha! Didst thou hear her say, "Hands off?"

1st Cit. Ay, I heard her say it, and I felt her do it! What then?

Point. Thou dost not see the humour of that?

1st Cit. Nay, if I do, hang me!

Point. Thou dost not? Now observe. She said "Hands off!" Whose hands? Thine. Off what? Off *her*. Why? Because she is a woman. Now had she *not* been a woman, thine hands had not been set upon her at all. So the reason for the laying on of hands is the reason for the taking off of hands, and herein is contradiction contradicted! It is the very marriage of *pro* with *con*; and no such lopsided union either, as times go, for *pro* is not more unlike *con* than man is unlike woman—yet men and women marry every day with none to say "Oh, the pity of it," but I and fools like me! Now wherewithal shall we please you? We can rhyme you couplet, triolet, quatrain, sonnet, rondolet, ballade, what you will. Or we can dance you saraband, gondolet, carole, pimpernel or Jumping Joan.

Elsie. Let us give them the singing farce of the Merryman and his Maid—therein is song and dance too.

All. Ay, the Merryman and his Maid!

DUET.—POINT AND ELSIE.

Point. I have a song to sing, O!

Elsie. Sing me your song, O!

Point. It is sung to the moon
By a love-lorn loon,
Who fled from the mocking throng, O.
It's the song of a merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was glum
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye.
Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup, and he craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye.

Elsie. I have a song to sing, O!

Point. Sing me your song, O!

Elsie. It is sung with the ring
Of the songs maids sing
Who love with a love life-long, O!
It's the song of a merrymaid, peerly proud
Who loved a lord, and who laughed aloud
At the moan of the merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sore, whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!
Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup, etc.

Point. I have a song to sing, O!

Elsie. Sing me your song, O!

Point. It is sung to the knell
Of a churchyard bell,
And a doleful dirge, ding dong, O!
It's a song of a popinjay, bravely born,
Who turned up his noble nose with scorn
At the humble merrymaid, peerly proud,
Who loved that lord, and who laughed aloud
At the moan of the merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

Both. Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup, etc.

Elsie. I have a song to sing, O!

Point. Sing me your song, O!

Elsie. It is sung with a sigh
And a tear in the eye,
For it tells of a righted wrong, O!
It's a song of a merrymaid, once so gay,
Who turned on her heel and tripped away
From the peacock popinjay, bravely born,
Who turned up his noble nose with scorn
At the humble heart that he did not prize:
So she begged on her knees, with downcast eyes,
For the love of the merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

Both. Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
His pains were o'er, and he sighed no more,
For he lived in the love of a ladye!

1*st Cit.* Well sung and well danced!
2*nd Cit.* A kiss for that, pretty maid!

All. Ay, a kiss all round.

Elsie (*drawing dagger*). Best beware! I am armed!

Point. Back, sirs—back! This is going too far.

2nd Cit. Thou dost not see the humour of it, eh? Yet there is humour in all things—even in this. (*Trying to kiss her.*)

Elsie. Help! help!

Enter LIEUTENANT, *with guard. Crowd falls back.*

Lieut. What is this pother?

Elsie. Sir, I sang to these folk, and they would have repaid me with gross courtesy, but for your honour's coming.

Lieut. (*to* Mob). Away with ye! Clear the rabble. (*Guards push crowd off, and go off with them.*) Now, my girl, who are you, and what do you here?

Elsie. May it please you, sir, we are two strolling players, Jack Point and I, Elsie Maynard, at your worship's service. We go from fair to fair, singing, and dancing, and playing brief interludes; and so we make a poor living.

Lieut. You two, eh? Are ye man and wife?

Point. No, sir; for though I'm a fool, there is a limit to my folly. Her mother, old Bridget Maynard, travels with us (for Elsie is a good girl), but the old woman is a-bed with fever, and we have come here to pick up some silver, to buy an electuary for her.

Lieut. Hark ye, my girl! Your mother is ill?

Elsie. Sorely ill, sir.

Lieut. And needs good food, and many things that thou canst not buy?

Elsie. Alas! sir, it is too true.

Lieut. Wouldst thou earn a hundred crowns?

Elsie. An hundred crowns! They might save her life!

Lieut. Then listen! A worthy, but unhappy gentleman is to be beheaded in an hour on this very spot. For sufficient reasons, he desires to marry before he dies, and he hath asked me to find him a wife. Wilt thou be that wife?

Elsie. The wife of a man I have never seen!

Point. Why, sir, look you, I am concerned in this; for though I am not yet wedded to Elsie Maynard, time works wonders, and there's no knowing what may be in store for us. Have we your worship's word for it that this gentleman will die to-day?

Lieut. Nothing is more certain, I grieve to say.

Point. And that the maiden will be allowed to depart the very instant the ceremony is at an end.

Lieut. The very instant. I pledge my honour that it shall be so.

Point. An hundred crowns?

Lieut. An hundred crowns!

Point. For my part, I consent. It is for Elsie to speak.

TRIO.—ELSIE, POINT, LIEUT.

Lieut.
How say you, maiden, will you wed
A man about to lose his head?
For half an hour
You'll be a wife,
And then the dower
Is yours for life.
A headless bridegroom why refuse?
If truth the poets tell,
Most bridegrooms, ere they marry, lose
Both head and heart as well!

Elsie.
A strange proposal you reveal,
It almost makes my senses reel.
Alas! I'm very poor indeed,
And such a sum I sorely need.
My mother, sir, is like to die,
This money life may bring,
Bear this in mind, I pray, if I
Consent to do this thing!

Point.
Though as a general rule of life
I don't allow my promised wife,
My lovely bride that is to be,
To marry any one but me,
Yet if the fee is promptly paid,
And he, in well-earned grave,
Within the hour is duly laid,
Objection I will waive!
Yes, objection I will waive!

All.
Temptation, oh temptation,
Were we, I pray, intended
To shun, whate'er our station,
Your fascinations splendid;
Or fall, whene'er we view you,
Head over heels into you!
Temptation, oh temptation, etc.

[*During this, the* LIEUTENANT *has whispered to* WILFRED *(who has entered).* WILFRED *binds* ELSIE'S *eyes with a kerchief, and leads her into the Cold Harbour Tower.*

Lieut. And so, good fellow, you are a jester?

Point. Ay, sir, and, like some of my jests, out of place.

Lieut. I have a vacancy for such an one. Tell me, what are your qualifications for such a post.

Point. Marry, sir, I have a pretty wit. I can rhyme you extempore; I can convulse you with quip and conundrum; I have the lighter philosophies at my tongue's tip; I can be merry, wise, quaint, grim, and sardonic, one by one, or all at once; I have a pretty turn for anecdote; I know all the jests—ancient and modern—past, present, and to come; I can riddle you from dawn of day to set of sun, and, if that content you not, well on to midnight and the small hours. Oh, sir, a pretty wit, I warrant you—a pretty, pretty wit!

RECIT AND SONG.—POINT.

I've jest and joke
And quip and crank,
For lowly folk
And men of rank.
I ply my craft
And know no fear,
I aim my shaft
At prince or peer.
At peer or prince—at prince or peer,
I aim my shaft and know no fear!

I've wisdom from the East and from the West,
That's subject to no academic rule;
You may find in it the jeering of a jest,
Or distil it from the folly of a fool.
I can teach you with a quip, if I've a mind;
I can trick you into learning with a laugh;
Oh, winnow all my folly, and you'll find
A grain or two of truth among the chaff!

I can set a braggart quailing with a quip,
The upstart I can wither with a whim;
He may wear a merry laugh upon his lip,
But his laughter has an echo that is grim
When they're offered to the world in merry guise,
Unpleasant truths are swallowed with a will—
For he who'd make his fellow-creatures wise
Should always gild the philosophic pill!

Lieut. And how came you to leave your last employ?

Point. Why, sir, it was in this wise. My Lord was the Archbishop of Canterbury, and it was considered that one of my jokes was unsuited to His Grace's family circle. In truth I ventured to ask a poor riddle, sir—Wherein lay the difference between His Grace and poor Jack Point? His Grace was pleased to give it up, sir. And thereupon I told him that whereas His Grace was paid ten thousand pounds a year for being good, poor Jack Point was good—for nothing. 'Twas but a harmless jest, but it offended His Grace, who whipped me and set me in the stocks for a scurril rogue, and so we

parted. I had as lief not take post again with the dignified clergy.

Lieut. But I trust you are very careful not to give offence. I have daughters.

Point. Sir, my jests are most carefully selected, and anything objectionable is expunged. If your honour pleases, I will try them first on you honour's chaplain.

Lieut. Can you give me an example? Say that I had sat me down hurrriedly on something sharp?

Point. Sir, I should say that you had sat down on the spur of the moment.

Lieut. Humph. I don't think much of that. Is that the best you can do?

Point. It has always been much admired, sir, but we will try again.

Lieut. Well, then, I am at dinner, and the joint of meat is but half cooked.

Point. Why then, sir, I should say—that what is *under*done cannot be helped.

Lieut. I see. I think that manner of thing would be somewhat irritating.

Point. At first, sir, perhaps; but use is everything, and you would come in time to like it.

Lieut. We will suppose that I caught you kissing the kitchen wench under my very nose.

Point. Under *her* very nose, good sir—not under yours! *That* is where *I* would kiss her. Do you take me? Oh, sir, a pretty wit—a pretty, pretty wit!

Lieut. The maiden comes. Follow me, friend, and we will discuss this matter at length in my library.

Point. I am your worship's servant. That is to say, I trust I soon shall be. But, before proceeding to a more serious topic, can you tell me, sir, why a cook's brain-pan is like an over wound clock?

Lieut. A truce to this fooling—follow me.

Point. Just my luck; my best conundrum wasted!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ELSIE *from Tower, followed by* WILFRED, *who removes the bandage from her eyes.*

RECITATIVE AND BALLAD.—ELSIE.

'Tis done! I am a bride! Oh, little ring,
That bearest in thy circlet all the gladness
That lovers hope for, and that poets sing,
What bringest thou to me but gold and sadness?

A bridegroom all unknown, save in this wise,
To-day he dies! To-day, alas, he dies!

Though tear and long-drawn sigh
Ill fit a bride,
No sadder wife than I
The whole world wide!
Ah me! Ah me!
Yet maids there be
Who would consent to lose
The very rose of youth,
The flower of life,
To be, in honest truth,
A wedded wife,
No matter whose!

Ere half an hour has rung,
A widow I!
Ah, Heaven, he is too young,
Too brave to die!
Ah me! Ah me!
Yet wives there be
So weary worn, I trow,
That they would scarce complain,
So that they could
In half an hour attain
To widowhood,
No matter how!

[*Exit* ELSIE *as* WILFRED *comes down.*

Wil. (*looking after* ELSIE). 'Tis an odd freak, for a dying man and his confessor to be closeted alone with a strange singing girl. I would fain have espied them, but they stopped up the keyhole. *My* keyhole!

Enter PHŒBE *with* MERYLL, *who carries a bundle.* MERYLL *remains in the background, unobserved by* WILFRED.

Phœ. (*aside*). Wilfred—and alone! Now to get the keys from him. (*Aloud.*) Wilfred—has no reprieve arrived?

Wil. None. Thine adored Fairfax is to die.

Phœ. Nay, thou knowest that I have naught but pity for the poor condemned gentlemen.

Wil. I know that he who is about to die is more to thee than I, who am alive and well.

Phœ. Why, that were out of reason, dear Wilfred. Do they not say that a live ass is better than a dead lion! No, I don't mean that!

Wil. They say that, do they?

Phœ. It's unpardonably rude of them, but I believe they put it in that way. Not that it applies to thee, who art clever beyond all telling!

Wil. Oh yes; as an assistant tormentor.

Phœ. As a wit, as a humorist, as a most philosophic commentator on the vanity of human resolution.

[PHŒBE *slyly takes bunch of keys from* WILFRED'S *waistband, and hands them to* MERYLL, *who enters the Tower, unnoticed by* WILFRED.

Wil. Truly, I have seen great resolution give way under my persuasive methods. (*Working a small thumbscrew.*) In the nice regulation of a screw—in the hundredth part of a single revolution lieth all the difference between stony reticence and a torrent of impulsive unbosoming that the pen can scarcely follow. Ha! ha! I am a mad wag.

Phœ. (*with a grimace*). Thou art a most light-hearted and delightful companion, Master Wilfred. Thine anecdotes of the torture-chamber are the prettiest hearing.

Wil. I'm a pleasant fellow an I choose. I believe I am the merriest dog that barks. Ah, we might be passing happy together——

Phœ. Perhaps. I do not know.

Wil. For thou wouldst make a most tender and loving wife.

Phœ. Ay, to one whom I really loved. For there is a wealth of love within this little heart, saving up for—I wonder whom? Now, of all the world of men, I wonder whom? To think that he whom I am to wed is now alive and somewhere! Perhaps far away, perhaps close at hand! And I know him not! It seemeth that I am wasting time in not knowing him.

Wil. Now, say that it is I—nay! suppose it for the nonce. Say that we are wed—suppose it only—say that thou art my very bride, and I thy cheery, joyous, bright, frolicsome husband—and that the day's work being done, and the prisoners stored away for the night, thou and I are alone together—with a long, long evening before us!

Phœ. (*with a grimace*). It is a pretty picture—but I scarcely know. It cometh so unexpectedly—and yet—and yet—*were* I thy bride——

Wil. Ay!—wert thou my bride!

Phœ. Oh, how I would love thee!

BALLAD.—PHŒBE.

Were I thy bride,
Then the whole world beside
Were not too wide
To hold my wealth of love—
Were I thy bride!

Upon thy breast
My loving head would rest,
As on her nest
The tender turtle-dove—
Were I thy bride!

This heart of mine
Would be one heart with thine,
And in that shrine
Our happiness would dwell—
Were I thy bride!

And all day long
Our lives should be a song:
No grief, no wrong
Should make my heart rebel—
Were I thy bride!

The silvery flute,
The melancholy lute,
Were night owl's hoot
To my love-whispered coo—
Were I thy bride!

The skylark's trill
Were but discordance shrill
To the soft thrill
Of wooing as I'd woo—
Were I thy bride!

MERYLL *re-enters; gives keys to* PHŒBE, *who replaces them at* WILFRED'S *girdle, unnoticed by him.*

The rose's sigh
Were as a carrion's cry
To lullaby
Such as I'd sing to thee,
Were I thy bride!

A feather's press
Were leaden heaviness
To my caress.
But then, of course, you see
I'm not thy bride!

[*Exit* PHŒBE.

Wil. No, thou'rt not—not yet! But, Lord, how she woo'd! I should be no mean judge of wooing, seeing that I have been more hotly woo'd than most men. I have been woo'd by maid, widow, and wife. I have been woo'd boldly, timidly, tearfully, shyly—by direct assault, by suggestion, by implication, by inference, and by innuendo. But this wooing is not of the common order: it is the wooing of one who must needs woo me, if she die for it! [*Exit* WILFRED.

Enter MERYLL, *cautiously, from Tower*

Mer. (*looking after them*). The deed is, so far, safely accomplished. The slyboots, how she wheedled him! What a helpless ninny is a love-sick man! He is but as a lute in a woman's hands—she plays upon him whatever tune she will. But the Colonel comes. I' faith he's just in time, for the Yeomen parade here for his execution in two minutes.

Enter FAIRFAX, *without beard and moustache, and dressed in Yeomen's uniform.*

Fair. My good and kind friend, thou runnest a grave risk for me!

Mer. Tut, sir, no risk. I'll warrant none here will recognize you. You make a brave yeoman, sir! So—this ruff is too high; so—and the sword should hang thus. Here is your halbert, sir, carry it thus. The yeomen come. Now, remember, you are my brave son, Leonard Meryll.

Fair. If I may not bear mine own name, there is none other I would bear so readily.

Mer. Now, sir, put a bold face on it; for they come.

Enter Yeomen of the Guard.

RECITATIVE.—SERGEANT MERYLL.

Ye Tower Yeomen, nursed in war's alarms,
Suckled on gunpowder, and weaned on glory,
Behold my son, whose all-subduing arms
Have formed the theme of many a song and story.
Forgive his aged father's pride; nor jeer
His aged father's sympathetic tear!
[*Pretending to weep.*

CHORUS.

Leonard Meryll!
Leonard Meryll!
Dauntless he in time of peril!
Man of power,
Knighthood's flower,
Welcome to the grim old Tower!
To the Tower, welcome thou!

RECITATIVE.—FAIRFAX.

Forbear, my friends, and spare me this ovation,
I have small claim to such consideration:
The tales that of my prowess have been stated
Are all prodigiously exaggerated!

CHORUS.

'Tis ever thus
Wherever valour true is found,
True modesty will there abound.

'Tis ever thus;
Wherever valour true is found,
True modesty will there abound.

COUPLETS.

1st Yeoman. Didst thou not, oh, Leonard Meryll!
Standard lost in last campaign,
Rescue it at deadly peril—
Bear it bravely back again?

Chorus. Leonard Meryll, at his peril,
Bore it bravely back again!

2nd Yeoman. Didst thou not, when prisoner taken,
And debarred from all escape,
Face, with gallant heart unshaken,
Death in most appalling shape?

Chorus. Leonard Meryll faced his peril,
Death in most appalling shape!

Fair. Truly I was to be pitied,
Having but an hour to live,
I reluctantly submitted,
I had no alternative!
Oh! the facts that have been stated
Of my deeds of derring-do,
Have been much exaggerated,
Very much exaggerated,
Monstrously exaggerated!
Scarce a word of them is true!

Enter PHŒBE. *She rushes to* FAIRFAX *and embraces him.*

RECITATIVE.

Phœ. Leonard!
Fair. (*puzzled*). I beg your pardon?
Phœ. Don't you know me?
I'm little Phœbe!
Fair. (*still puzzled*). Phœbe? Is this Phœbe?
My little Phœbe? (*Aside.*) Who the deuce may *she* be?
It can't be Phœbe, surely?
Wil. Yes, 'tis Phœbe—
Thy sister Phœbe!
All. Ay, he speaks the truth;
'Tis Phœbe!
Fair. (*pretending to recognize her*). Sister Phœbe!
Phœ. Oh, my brother! (*Embrace.*)
Fair. Why, how you've grown! I did not recognize you!
Phœ. So many years! Oh, brother! (*Embrace.*)
Fair. Oh, my sister!
Wil. Ay, hug him, girl! There are three thou mayst hug—
Thy father and thy brother and—myself!
Fair. Thyself, forsooth? And who art thou thyself?

Wil. Good sir, we are betrothed. (FAIRFAX *turns inquiringly to* PHŒBE.)

Phœ. Or more or less—
But rather less than more!

Wil. To thy fond care
I do commend thy sister. Be to her
An ever-watchful guardian—eagle-eyed!
And when she feels (as sometimes she does feel)
Disposed to indiscriminate caress,
Be thou at hand to take those favours from her!

All. Yes, yes,
Be thou at hand to take those favours from her!

Phœ. (*in* FAIRFAX'S *arms*). Yes, yes,
Be thou at hand to take those favours from me!

TRIO.—WILFRED, FAIRFAX, AND PHŒBE.

Wil.
To thy fraternal care
Thy sister I commend,
From every lurking snare
Thy lovely charge defend:
And to achieve this end,
Oh! grant, I pray, this boon—
She shall not quit thy sight:
From morn to afternoon—
From afternoon to night—
From seven o'clock to two—
From two to eventide—
From dim twilight to 'leven at night
She shall not quit thy side!

All. Oh! grant, I pray, this boon, etc.

Phœ.
So amiable I've grown,
So innocent as well,
That if I'm left alone
The consequences fell
No mortal can foretell.
So grant, I pray, this boon—
I shall not quit thy sight:
From morn to afternoon—
From afternoon to night—
From seven o'clock till two—
From two till day is done—
From dim twilight to 'leven at night
All kinds of risk I run!

All. So grant, I pray, this boon, etc.

Fair.
With brotherly readiness,
For my fair sister's sake,
At once I answer "Yes"—
That task I undertake—
My word I never break—
I freely grant that boon,
And I'll repeat my plight.

From morn to afternoon— [*Kiss.*
From afternoon to night— [*Kiss.*
From seven o'clock to two— [*Kiss.*
From two to evening meal— [*Kiss.*
From dim twilight to 'leven at night
That compact I will seal. [*Kiss.*

All. He freely grants that boon, etc.

[*The Bell of St. Peter's begins to toll. The crowd enters; the block is brought on to the stage, and the* Headsman *takes his place. The* Yeomen of the Guard *form up,* Fairfax *and two others entering the White Tower, to bring the prisoner to execution. The* Lieutenant *enters and takes his place, and tells off* Fairfax *and two others to bring the prisoner to execution.*

Chorus—(*to tolling accompaniment*).
The prisoner comes to meet his doom;
The block, the headsman, and the tomb.
The funeral bell begins to toll—
May Heaven have mercy on his soul!

Solo.—Elsie, *with Chorus.*
Oh, Mercy, thou whose smile has shone
So many a captive on;
Of all immured within these walls,
The very worthiest falls!

Enter Fairfax *and two other* Yeomen *from Tower in great excitement.*

My lord! my lord! I know not how to tell
The news I bear!
I and my comrades sought the prisoner's cell—
He is not there!
All. He is not there!
They sought the prisoner's cell—he is not there!

Trio.—Fairfax and Two Yeomen.
As escort for the prisoner
We sought his cell, in duty bound;
The double gratings open were,
No prisoner at all we found!
We hunted high, we hunted low,
We hunted here, we hunted there—
The man we sought, as truth will show,
Had vanished into empty air!
All. Had vanished into empty air!
The man they sought with anxious care
Had vanished into empty air!
Girls. Now, by our troth, the news is fair,
The man hath vanished into air!

All. As escort for the prisoner
They sought his cell in duty bound, etc.

Lieut. Astounding news! The prisoner fled.
(*To* WILFRED). Thy life shall forfeit be instead!
[WILFRED *is arrested.*

Wilfred. My lord, I did not set him free,
I hate the man—my rival he!
[WILFRED *is taken away.*

Meryll. The prisoner gone—I'm all agape!
Who could have helped him to escape?

Phœbe. Indeed I can't imagine who!
I've no idea at all—have you?

Dame. Of his escape no traces lurk
Enchantment must have been at work!

Elsie (*aside to* POINT). What have I done! Oh, woe is **me!**
I am his wife, and he is free!

Point. Oh, woe is *you*? Your anguish sink!
Oh, woe is *me*, I rather think!
Oh, woe is *me*, I rather think!
Yes, woe is *me*, I rather think!
Whate'er betide
You are his bride,
And I am left
Alone—bereft!
Yes, woe is *me*, I rather think
Yes, woe is *me*, I rather think!

ENSEMBLE.

LIEUTENANT.	ELSIE.	POINT.
All frenzied with despair I rave,	All frenzied with despair I rave,	All frenzied with despair I rave,
The grave is cheated of its due.	My anguish rends my heart in two.	My anguish rends my heart in two.
Who is the misbegotten knave	Unloved, to him my hand I gave;	Your hand to him you freely gave;
Who hath contrived this deed to do?	To him, unloved, bound to be true!	It's woe to *me*, not woe to you!
Let search be made throughout the land,	Unloved, unknown, unseen—the brand	My laugh is dead, my heart unmanned,
Or my vindictive anger dread—	Of infamy upon his head:	A jester with a soul of lead!
A thousand marks to him I hand	A bride that's husbandless, I stand	A lover loverless I stand,
Who brings him here, alive or dead.	To all mankind for ever dead!	To womankind for ever dead!

[*The others sing the* LIEUTENANT'S *verse, with altered pronouns. At the end,* ELSIE *faints in* FAIRFAX'S *arms; all the* Yeomen *and populace rush off the stage in different directions, to hunt for the fugitive, leaving only the* Headsman *on the stage, and* ELSIE *insensible in* FAIRFAX'S *arms.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Tower Green by Moonlight. Two days have elapsed.* Women *and* Yeomen of the Guard *discovered.*

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

Night has spread her pall once more,
And the prisoner still is free:
Open is his dungeon door,
Useless now his dungeon key!
He has shaken off his yoke—
How, no mortal man can tell!
Shame on loutish jailor-folk—
Shame on sleepy sentinel!
All. He has shaken off his yoke, etc.

SOLO.—DAME CARRUTHERS.

Warders are ye?
Whom do ye ward?
Bolt, bar, and key,
Shackle and cord,
Fetter and chain,
Dungeon of stone,
All are in vain—
Prisoner's flown!
Spite of ye all, he is free—he is free!
Whom do ye ward? Pretty warders are ye!

CHORUS OF YEOMEN.

Up and down, and in and out,
Here and there, and round about;
Every chamber, every house,
Every chink that holds a mouse,
Every crevice in the keep,
Where a beetle black could creep,
Every outlet, every drain,
Have we searched, but all in vain!

YEOMEN.

Warders are we:
Whom do we ward?
Bolt, bar, and key,
Shackle and cord,
Fetter and chain,
Dungeon of stone,
All are in vain.
Prisoner's flown!
Spite of us all, he is free! he is free!
Whom do we ward? warders are we.

WOMEN.

Warders, are ye?
Whom do ye ward?
Bolt, bar and key;
Shackle and cord,
Fetter and chain,
Dungeon of stone,
All are in vain.
Prisoner's flown!
Spite of ye all, he is free! he is free!
Whom do ye ward? Pretty warders are ye!

[*Exeunt all.*

Enter JACK POINT, *in low spirits, reading from a huge volume.*

Point (*reads*). "The Merrie Jestes of Hugh Ambrose. No. 7863. The Poor Wit and the Rich Councillor. A certayne poor wit, being an-hungered, did meet a well-fed councillor. 'Marry, fool,' quoth the councillor, 'whither away?' 'In truth,' said the poor wag, 'in that I have eaten naught these two dayes, I do wither away, and that right rapidly!' The councillor laughed hugely, and gave him a sausage." Humph! The councillor was easier to please than my new master, the Lieutenant. I would like to take post under that councillor. Ah! 'tis but melancholy mumming when poor heartbroken-jilted Jack Point must needs turn to Hugh Ambrose for original light humour!

Enter WILFRED, *also in low spirits.*

Wil. (*sighing*). Ah, Master Point!

Point (*changing his manner*). Ha! friend jailor! Jailor that wast—jailor that never shalt be more! Jailor that jailed not, or that jailed, if jail he did, so unjailorly that 'twas but jerry-jailing, or jailing in joke—though no joke to him who, by unjailorlike jailing, did so jeopardize his jailorship. Come, take heart, smile, laugh, wink, twinkle, thou tormentor that tormentest none—thou racker that rackest not—thou pincher out of place—come, take heart, and be merry, as I am!—(*aside, dolefully*)—as I am!

Wil. Ay, it's well for thee to laugh. Thou hast a good post, and hast cause to be merry.

Point (*bitterly*). Cause? Have we not all cause? Is not the world a big butt of humour, into which all who will may drive a gimlet? See, I am a salaried wit; and is there aught in nature more ridiculous? A poor dull, heart-broken man, who must needs be merry, or he will be whipped; who must rejoice, lest he starve; who must jest you, jibe you, quip you, crank you, wrack you, riddle you, from hour to hour, from day to day, from year to year, lest he dwindle, perish, starve, pine, and die! Why, when there's naught else to laugh at, I laugh at myself till I ache for it!

Wil. Yet I have often thought that a jester's calling would suit me to a hair.

Point. Thee? Would suit *thee*, thou death's head and cross-bones?

Wil. Ay, I have a pretty wit—a light, airy, joysome wit, spiced with anecdotes of prison cells and the torture chamber. Oh, a very delicate wit! I have tried it on many a prisoner,

and there have been some who smiled. Now it is not easy to make a prisoner smile. And it should not be difficult to be a good jester, seeing that thou art one.

Point. Difficult? Nothing easier. Nothing easier. Attend, and I will prove it to thee!

SONG.—POINT

Oh! a private buffoon is a light-hearted loon,
If you listen to popular rumour;
From morning to night he's so joyous and bright,
And he bubbles with wit and good humour!
He's so quaint and so terse, both in prose and in verse;
Yet though people forgive his transgression,
There are one or two rules that all family fools
Must observe, if they love their profession.
There are one or two rules,
Half a dozen, may be,
That all family fools,
Of whatever degree,
Must observe, if they love their profession.

If you wish to succeed as a jester, you'll need
To consider each person's auricular:
What is all right for B would quite scandalize C
(For C is so very particular);
And D may be dull, and E's very thick skull
Is as empty of brains as a ladle;
While F is F sharp, and will cry with a carp,
That he's known your best joke from his cradle!
When your humour they flout,
You can't let yourself go;
And it *does* put you out
When a person says, "Oh,
I have known that old joke from my cradle!"

If your master is surly, from getting up early
(And tempers are short in the morning),
An inopportune joke is enough to provoke
Him, to give you, at once, a month's warning.
Then if you refrain, he is at you again,
For he likes to get value for money.
He'll ask then and there, with an insolent stare,
"If you know that your paid to be funny?"
It adds to the task
Of a merryman's place,
When your principal asks,
With a scowl on his face,
If you know that you're paid to be funny!

Comes a Bishop, maybe, or a solemn D.D.—
Oh, beware of his anger provoking!
Better not pull his hair—don't stick pins in his chair:
He don't understand practical joking.
If the jests that you crack have an orthodox smack

You may get a bland smile from these sages;
But should it, by chance, be imported from France,
Half a crown is stopped out of your wages!
It's a general rule,
Though your zeal it may quench,
If the family fool
Tell's a joke that's too French,
Half a crown is stopped out of his wages!

Though your head it may rack with a bilious attack,
And your senses with toothache you're losing,
Don't be mopy and flat—they don't fine you for that,
If you're properly quaint and amusing!
Though your wife ran away with a soldier that day,
And took with her your trifle of money;
Bless your heart, they don't mind—they're exceedingly kind—
They don't blame you—as long as you're funny!
It's a comfort to feel
If your partner should flit,
Though *you* suffer a deal,
They don't mind it a bit—
They don't blame you—so long as you're funny.

Point. And so thou wouldst be a jester, eh? Now, listen! My sweetheart, Elsie Maynard, was secretly wed to this Fairfax half an hour ere he escaped.

Wil. She did well.

Point. She did nothing of the kind, so hold thy peace and perpend. Now, while he liveth she is dead to me and I to her, and so, my jibes and jokes notwithstanding, I am the saddest and the sorriest dog in England!

Wil. Thou art a very dull dog indeed.

Point. Now, if thou wilt swear that thou didst shoot this Fairfax while he was trying to swim across the river—it needs but the discharge of an arquebus on a dark night—and that he sank and was seen no more, I'll make thee the very Archbishop of jesters, and that in two days' time! Now, what sayest thou?

Wil. I am to lie?

Point. Heartily. But thy lie must be a lie of circumstance, which I will support with the testimony of eyes, ears and tongue.

Wil. And thou wilt qualify me as a jester?

Point. As a jester among jesters. I will teach thee all my original songs, my self-constructed riddles, my own ingenious paradoxes; nay, more, I will reveal to thee the source whence I get them. Now, what sayest thou?

Wil. Why, if it be but a lie thou wantest of me, I hold it cheap enough, and I say yes, it is a bargain!

DUET.—POINT AND WILFRED.

Both. Hereupon we're both agreed,
And all that we two
Do agree to
We'll secure by solemn deed,
To prevent all
Error mental.

I / You } on Elsie { am / are } to call
With a story
Grim and gory;
How this Fairfax died, and all

I / You } declare to
You're / I'm } to swear to.

Tell a tale of cock and bull,
Of convincing detail full;
Tale tremendous,
Heaven defend us!
What a tale of cock and bull!

In return for { your / my } own part

You are / I am } making,
Undertaking,
To instruct { me / you } in the art

(Art amazing,
Wonder raising)
Of a jester, jesting free.
Proud position—
High ambition!

And a lively one { I'll / you'll } be,
Wag-a-wagging,
Never flagging!
Tell a tale of cock and bull, etc.

[*Exeunt together.*

Enter FAIRFAX.

Fair. A day and a half gone, and no news of poor Fairfax! The dolts! They seek him everywhere, save within a dozen yards of his dungeon. So I am free! Free, but for the cursed haste with which I hurried headlong into the bonds of matrimony with—Heaven knows whom! As far as I remember, she should have been young; but even had not her face been concealed by her kerchief, I doubt whether, in my then plight, I should have taken much note of her. Free? Bah! The Tower bonds were but a thread of silk compared with these

conjugal fetters which I, fool that I was, placed upon mine own hands. From the one I broke readily enough—how to break the other!

SONG.—FAIRFAX.

Free from his fetters grim—
Free to depart;
Free both in life and limb—
In all but heart!
Bound to an unknown bride
For good and ill;
Ah, is not one so tied
A prisoner still?

Free, yet in fetters held
Till his last hour,
Gyves that no smith can weld,
No rust devour!
Although a monarch's hand
Had set him free,
Of all the captive band
The saddest he!

Enter MERYLL.

Fair. Well, Sergeant Meryll, and how fares thy pretty charge, Elsie Maynard?

Mer. Well enough, sir. She is quite strong again, and leaves us to-night.

Fair. Thanks to Dame Carruthers' kind nursing, eh?

Mer. Ay, deuce take the old witch! Ah, 'twas but a sorry trick you played me, sir, to bring the fainting girl to me. It gave the old lady an excuse for taking up her quarters in my house, and for the last two years I've shunned her like the plague. Another day of it and she would have married me! Good Lord, here she is again! I'll e'en go. (*Going.*)

Enter DAME CARRUTHERS *and* KATE, *her niece.*

Dame. Nay, Sergeant Meryll, don't go. I have something of grave import to say to thee.

Mer. (*aside*). It's coming.

Fair. (*laughing*). I'faith, I think I'm not wanted here. (*Going.*)

Dame. Nay, Master Leonard, I've naught to say to thy father that his son may not hear.

Fair. (*aside*). True. I'm one of the family; I had forgotten!

Dame. 'Tis about this Elsie Maynard. A pretty girl, Master Leonard.

Fair. Ay, fair as a peach blossom—what then?

Dame. She hath a liking for thee, or I mistake not.

Fair. With all my heart. She's as dainty a little maid as you'll find in a midsummer day's march.

Dame. Then be warned in time, and give not thy heart to her. Oh, *I* know what it is to give my heart to one who will have none of it!

Mer. (*aside*). Ay, *she* knows all about that. (*Aloud.*) And why is my boy to take heed of her? She's a good girl, Dame Carruthers.

Dame. Good enough, for aught I know. But she's no girl. She's a married woman.

Mer. A married woman! Tush, old lady—she's promised to Jack Point, the lieutenant's new jester.

Dame. Tush in thy teeth, old man! As my niece Kate sat by her bedside to-day, this Elsie slept, and as she slept she moaned and groaned, and turned this way and that way—and, "How shall I marry one I have never seen?" quoth she—then, "A hundred crowns!" quoth she—then, "Is it certain he will die in an hour?" quoth she—then, "I love him not and yet I am his wife," quoth she! Is it not so, Kate?

Kate. Ay, mother, 'tis even so.

Fair. Art thou sure of all this?

Kate. Ay, sir, for I wrote it all down on my tablets.

Dame. Now, mark my words: it was of this Fairfax she spake, and he is her husband, or I'll swallow my kirtle!

Mer. (*aside*). Is this true, sir?

Fair. True? Why, the girl was raving! Why should she marry a man who had but an hour to live?

Dame. Marry? There be those who would marry but for a minute, rather than die old maids.

Mer. (*aside*). Ay, I know one of them!

QUARTETTE.—KATE, FAIRFAX, DAME CARRUTHERS, AND MERYLL.

Strange adventure! Maiden wedded
To a groom she's never seen—
Never, never, never seen!
Groom about to be beheaded,
In an hour on Tower Green!
Tower, Tower, Tower Green!
Groom in dreary dungeon lying,
Groom as good as dead, or dying,
For a pretty maiden sighing—
Pretty maid of seventeen!
Seven—seven—seventeen

Strange adventure that we're trolling.
Modest maid and gallant groom—
Gallant, gallant, gallant groom!—

While the funeral bell is tolling,
Tolling, tolling, Bim-a-boom!
Bim-a, Bim-a, Bim-a-boom!
Modest maiden will not tarry;
Though but sixteen years she carry,
She must marry, she must marry,
Though the altar be a tomb—
Tower—Tower—Tower tomb!

[*Exeunt* DAME CARRUTHERS, MERYLL, *and* KATE.

Fair. So my mysterious bride is no other than this winsome Elsie! By my hand, 'tis no such ill-plunge in Fortune's lucky bag! I might have fared worse with my eyes open! But she comes. Now to test her principles. 'Tis not every husband who has a chance of wooing his own wife!

Enter ELSIE.

Fair. Mistress Elsie!

Elsie. Master Leonard!

Fair. So thou leavest us to-night?

Elsie. Yes, Master Leonard. I have been kindly tended, and I almost fear I am loth to go.

Fair. And this Fairfax. Wast thou glad when he escaped?

Elsie. Why, truly, Master Leonard, it is a sad thing that a young and gallant gentleman should die in the very fulness of his life.

Fair. Then when thou didst faint in my arms, it was for joy at his safety?

Elsie. It may be so. I was highly wrought, Master Leonard, and I am but a girl, and so, when I am highly wrought, I faint.

Fair. Now, dost thou know, I am consumed with a perilous jealousy?

Elsie. Thou? And of whom?

Fair. Why, of this Fairfax, surely!

Elsie. Of Colonel Fairfax!

Fair. Ay. Shall I be frank with thee? Elsie—I love thee, ardently, passionately! (ELSIE *alarmed and surprised.*) Elsie, I have loved thee these two days—which is a long time—and I would fain join my life to thine!

Elsie. Master Leonard! Thou art jesting!

Fair. Jesting? May I shrivel into raisins if I jest! I love thee with a love that is a fever—with a love that is a frenzy—with a love that eateth up my heart! What sayest thou? Thou wilt not let my heart be eaten up?

Elsie. (*aside*). Oh, mercy! What am I to say?

Fair. Dost thou love me, or hast thou been insensible these two days?

Elsie. I love all brave men.

Fair. Nay, there is love in excess. I thank Heaven, there are many brave men in England; but if thou lovest them all, I withdraw my thanks.

Elsie. I love the bravest best. But, sir, I may not listen—I am not free—I—I am a wife!

Fair. Thou a wife? Whose? His name? His hours are numbered—nay, his grave is dug, and his epitaph set up! Come, his name?

Elsie. Oh, sir! keep my secret—it is the only barrier that Fate could set up between us. My husband is none other than Colonel Fairfax!

Fair. The greatest villain unhung! The most ill-begotten, ill-favoured, ill-mannered, ill-natured, ill-omened, ill-tempered dog in Christendom!

Elsie. It is very like. He is naught to me—for I never saw him. I was blindfolded, and he was to have died within the hour; and he did not die—and I am wedded to him, and my heart is broken!

Fair. He was to have died, and he did *not* die! The scoundrel! The perjured, traitrous, villain! Thou shouldst have insisted on his dying first, to make sure. 'Tis the only way with these Fairfaxes.

Elsie. I now wish I had!

Fair. (*aside*). Bloodthirsty little maiden! (*Aloud.*) A fig for this Fairfax! Be mine—he will never know—he dares not show himself; and if he dare, what art thou to him? Fly with me, Elsie—we will be married to-morrow, and thou shalt be the happiest wife in England!

Elsie. Master Leonard! I am amazed! Is it thus that brave soldiers speak to poor girls? Oh! for shame, for shame! I am wed—not the less because I love not my husband. I am a wife, sir, and I have a duty, and—oh, sir! thy words terrify me—they are not honest—they are wicked words, and unworthy thy great and brave heart! Oh, shame upon thee! shame upon thee!

Fair. Nay, Elsie, I did but jest. I spake but to try thee.

[*Shot heard.*

Enter MERYLL, *hastily.*

Mer. (*recit.*) Hark! What was that, sir?
Fair. Why, an arquebus—
Fired from the wharf, unless I much mistake.
Mer. Strange—and at such an hour! What can it mean?

[*In the meantime, the* Chorus *have entered.*

CHORUS.

Now what can that have been—
A shot so late at night,
Enough to cause affright!
What can the portent mean?

Are foemen in the land?
Is London to be wrecked?
What are we to expect?
What danger is at hand?
Yes, let us understand
What danger is at hand!

LIEUTENANT *enters, also* POINT *and* WILFRED.

Lieut. Who fired that shot? At once the truth declare!
Wil. My lord, 'twas I—to rashly judge forbear!
Point. My lord, 'twas he—to rashly judge forbear!

DUET AND CHORUS.—WILFRED AND POINT.

Wil. Like a ghost his vigil keeping—
Point. Or a spectre all-appalling—
Wil. I beheld a figure creeping—
Point. I should rather call it crawling—
Wil. He was creeping—
Point. He was crawling—
Wil. He was creeping, creeping—
Point. Crawling!
Wil. Not a moment's hesitation—
I myself upon him flung,
With a hurried exclamation
To his draperies I hung;
Then we closed with one another
In a rough-and-tumble smother;
Colonel Fairfax and no other
Was the man to whom I clung!

All. Colonel Fairfax and no other
Was the man to whom he clung!

Wil. After mighty tug and tussle—
Point. It resembled more a struggle—
Wil. He, by dint of stronger muscle—
Point. Or by some infernal juggle—
Wil. From my clutches quickly sliding—
Point. I should rather call it slipping—
Wil. With the view, no doubt, of hiding—
Point. Or escaping to the shipping—
Wil. With a gasp, and with a quiver—
Point. I'd describe it as a shiver—
Wil. Down he dived into the river
And, alas, I cannot swim.
All. It's enough to make one shiver,
With a gasp and with a quiver;
Down he dived into the river,
It was very brave of him!

Wil. Ingenuity is catching;
With the view my king of pleasing,
Arquebus from sentry snatching—
Point. I should rather call it seizing—
Wil. With an ounce or two of lead
I despatched him through the head!
All. He despatched him through the head
Wil. I discharged it without winking,
Little time he lost in thinking,
Like a stone I saw him sinking—
Point. I should say a lump of lead.
Wil. Like a stone, my boy, I said—
Point. Like a heavy lump of lead.
Wil. Anyhow the man is dead.
All. Whether stone or lump of lead,
Arquebus from sentry seizing,
With the view his king of pleasing.
Wilfred shot him through the head,
And he's very, very dead.

And it matters very little whether stone or lump of lead,
It is very, very certain that he's very, very dead!

RECITATIVE.—LIEUTENANT.

The river must be dragged—no time be lost;
The body must be found, at any cost.
To this attend without undue delay;
So set to work with what despatch ye may! [*Exit.*

All. Yes, yes,
We'll set to work with what despatch we may!

[*Four men raise* WILFRED, *and carry him off on their shoulders.*

CHORUS.

Hail the valiant fellow who
Did this deed of derring-do!
Honours wait on such an one;
By my head, 'twas bravely done

[*Exeunt all but* ELSIE, POINT, FAIRFAX, *and* PHŒBE.

Point (*to* ELSIE, *who is weeping*). Nay, sweetheart, be comforted. This Fairfax was but a pestilent fellow, and, as he had to die, he might as well die thus as any other way. 'Twas a good death.

Elsie. Still he was my husband, and had he not been, he was nevertheless a living man, and now he is dead; and so, by your leave, my tears may flow unchidden, Master Point.

Fair. And thou didst see all this?

Point. Ay, with both eyes at once—this and that. The testimony of one eye is naught—he may lie. But when it is corroborated by the other, it is good evidence that none may gainsay. Here are both present in court, ready to swear to him!

Phœ. But art thou sure it was Colonel Fairfax? Saw you his face?

Point. Ay, and a plaguy ill-favoured face too. A very hang-dog face—a felon face—a face to fright the headsman himself, and make him strike awry. Oh, a plaguy bad face, take my word for 't. (PHŒBE *and* FAIRFAX *laugh*). How they laugh! 'Tis ever thus with simple folk—an accepted wit has but to say, "Pass the mustard," and they roar their ribs out!

Fair. (*aside*). If ever I come to life again thou shalt pay for this, Master Point!

Point. Now, Elsie, thou art free to choose again, so behold me: I am young and well-favoured. I have a pretty wit. I can jest you, jibe you, quip you, crank you, wrack you, riddle you——

Fair. Tush, man, thou knowest not how to woo. 'Tis not to be done with time-worn jests and thread-bare sophistries; with quips, conundrums, rhymes, and paradoxes. 'Tis an art in itself, and must be studied gravely and conscientiously.

TRIO.—FAIRFAX, ELSIE, AND PHŒBE.

Fair. A man who would woo a fair maid,
Should 'prentice himself to the trade;
And study all day,
In a methodical way,
How to flatter, cajole, and persuade.
He should 'prentice himself at fourteen,
And practice from morning to e'en;
And when he's of age,
If he will, I'll engage,
He may capture the heart of a queen!

All. It is purely a matter of skill,
Which all may attain if they will:
But every Jack,
He must study the knack
If he wants to make sure of his Jill!

Elsie. If he's made the best use of his time,
His twig he'll so carefully lime,
That every bird
Will come down at his word,
Whatever its plumage and clime.
He must learn that the thrill of a touch
May mean little, or nothing, or much;
It's an instrument rare,
To be handled with care,
And ought to be treated as such.

All. It is purely a matter of skill, etc.

Phœ. Then a glance may be timid or free,
It will vary in mighty degree,

From an impudent stare
To a look of despair
That no maid without pity can see.
And a glance of despair is no guide—
It may have its ridiculous side;
It may draw you a tear
Or a box on the ear;
You can never be sure till you've tried!

All. It is purely a matter of skill, etc.

Fair. (*aside to* POINT). Now, listen to me—'tis done thus. (*Aloud.*) Mistress Elsie, there is one here who, as thou knowest, loves thee right well!

Point (*aside*). That he does—right well!

Fair. He is but a man of poor estate, but he hath a loving, honest heart. He will be a true and trusty husband to thee, and if thou wilt be his wife, thou shalt lie curled up in his heart, like a little squirrel in its nest!

Point (*aside*). 'Tis a pretty figure. A maggot in a nut lies closer, but a squirrel will do.

Fair. He knoweth that thou wast a wife—an unloved and unloving wife, and his poor heart was near to breaking. But now that thine unloving husband is dead, and thou art free, he would fain pray that thou wouldst hearken unto him, and give him hope that thou wouldst be his!

Phœ. (*alarmed*). He presses her hands—and he whispers in her ear! Odds boddikins, what does it mean?

Fair. Now, sweetheart, tell me—wilt thou be this poor good fellow's wife?

Elsie. If the good, brave man—*is* he a brave man?

Fair. So men say.

Point (*aside*). That's not true, but let it pass this once.

Elsie. If this brave man will be content with a poor penniless untaught maid——

Point (*aside*). Widow—but let *that* pass.

Elsie. I will be his true and loving wife, and that with my heart of hearts!

Fair. My own dear love! (*Embracing her.*)

Phœ. (*in great agitation*). Why, what's all this? Brother—brother—it is not seemly!

Point (*also alarmed*). (*Aside.*) Oh, I can't let *that* pass. (*Aloud*). Hold, enough, master Leonard! An advocate should have his fee, but methinks thou art over-paying thyself!

Fair. Nay, that is for Elsie to say. I promised thee I would show thee how to woo, and herein is the proof of the virtue of my teaching. Go thou, and apply it elsewhere! (PHŒBE *bursts into tears.*)

QUARTETTE.—ELSIE, FAIRFAX, PHŒBE, AND POINT.

Elsie and Fair. When a wooer
Goes a-wooing,
Naught is truer
Than his joy.
Maiden hushing
All his suing—
Boldly blushing—
Bravely coy!

All. Oh, the happy days of doing!
Oh, the sighing and the suing!
When a wooer goes a-wooing,
Oh, the sweets that never cloy!

Phœ. (*weeping*) When a brother
Leaves his sister
For another,
Sister weeps.
Tears that trickle,
Tears that blister—
'Tis but mickle
Sister reaps!

All. Oh, the doing and undoing,
Oh, the sighing and the suing,
When a brother goes a-wooing,
And a sobbing sister weeps!

Point. When a jester
Is out-witted,
Feelings fester,
Heart is lead!
Food for fishes
Only fitted,
Jester wishes
He was dead!

All. Oh, the doing and undoing,
Oh, the sighing and the suing,
When a jester goes a-wooing,
And he wishes he was dead!

[*Exeunt all but* PHŒBE, *who remains weeping.*

Phœ. And I helped that man to escape, and I've kept his secret, and pretended that I was his dearly loving sister, and done everything I could think of to make folk believe I *was* his loving sister, and this is his gratitude! Before I pretend to be sister to anybody again, I'll turn nun, and be sister to everybody—one as much as another!

Enter WILFRED.

Wil. In tears, eh? What a plague art thou grizzling for now?

Phœ. Why am I grizzling? Thou hast often wept for jealousy—well, 'tis for jealousy I weep now. Ay, yellow, bilious, jaundiced jealousy. So make the most of that, Master Wilfred.

Wil. But I have never given thee cause for jealousy. The Lieutenant's cook-maid and I are but the merest gossips!

Phœ. Jealous of thee! Bah! I'm jealous of no craven cock-on-a-hill, who crows about what he'd do an he dared! I am jealous of another and a better man than thou—set that down, Master Wilfred. And he is to marry Elsie Maynard, the little pale fool—set that down, Master Wilfred; and my heart is well nigh broken! There, thou hast it all! Make the most of it!

Wil. The man thou lovest is to marry Elsie Maynard? Why, that is no other than thy brother, Leonard Meryll!

Phœ. (*aside*). Oh, mercy! what have I said?

Wil. Why, what manner of brother is this, thou lying little jade? Speak! Who is this man whom thou hast called brother, and fondled, and coddled, and kissed—with my connivance too! Oh! Lord, with my connivance! Ha! should it be this Fairfax! (PHŒBE *starts.*) It is! It is this accursed Fairfax! It's Fairfax! Fairfax, who——

Phœ. Whom thou hast just shot through the head, and who lies at the bottom of the river!

Wil. A—I—I may have been mistaken. We are but fallible mortals, the best of us. But I'll make sure—I'll make sure. (*Going.*)

Phœ. Stay—one word. I think it cannot be Fairfax—mind, I say I *think*—because thou hast just slain Fairfax. But whether he be Fairfax or no Fairfax, he is to marry Elsie—and—and—as thou hast shot him through the head, and he is dead, be content with that, and I will be thy wife!

Wil. Is that sure?

Phœ. Ay, sure enough, for there's no help for it! Thou art a very brute—but even brutes must marry, I suppose.

Wil. My beloved! (*Embraces her.*)

Phœ. (*aside*). Ugh!

Enter LEONARD, *hastily.*

Leon. Phœbe, rejoice, for I bring glad tidings. Colonel Fairfax's reprieve was signed two days since, but it was foully and maliciously kept back by Secretary Poltwhistle, who designed that it should arrive after the Colonel's death. It hath just come to hand, and it is now in the Lieutenant's possession!

Phœ. Then the Colonel is free? Oh, kiss me, kiss me, my dear! Kiss me, again, and again!

Wil. (*dancing with fury*). Ods bobs, death o' my life! Art thou mad? Am *I* mad? Are we *all* mad?

Phœ. Oh, my dear—my dear, I'm well-nigh crazed with joy! (*Kissing* LEONARD.)

Wil. Come away from him, thou hussy—thou jade—thou kissing, clinging, cockatrice! And as for thee, sir, I'll rip thee like a herring for this! I'll skin thee for it! I'll cleave thee to the chine! I'll—— Oh! Phœbe! Phœbe! Phœbe! Who is this man?

Phœ. Peace, fool. He is my brother!

Wil. Another brother! Are there any more of them? Produce them all at once, and let me know the worst!

Phœ. This is the real Leonard, dolt; the other was but his substitute. The *real* Leonard, I say—my father's own son.

Wil. How do I know this? Has he "brother" writ large on his brow? I mistrust thy brothers! Thou art but a false jade! [*Exit* LEONARD.

Phœ. Now, Wilfred, be just. Truly I did deceive thee before—but it was to save a precious life—and to save it, not for me, but for another. They are to be wed this very day. Is not this enough for thee? Come—I am thy Phœbe—thy very own—and we will be wed in a year—or two—or three, at the most. Is not that enough for thee?

Enter MERYLL, *excitedly, followed by* DAME CARRUTHERS (*who listens unobserved*).

Mer. Phœbe, hast thou heard the brave news?

Phœ. (*still in* WILFRED'S *arms*). Ay, father.

Mer. I'm nigh mad with joy! (*Seeing* WILFRED.) Why, what's all this?

Phœ. Oh, father, he discovered our secret through my folly, and the price of his silence is——

Wil. Phœbe's heart.

Phœ. Oh dear, no—Phœbe's hand.

Wil. It's the same thing!

Phœ. Is it! [*Exeunt* WILFRED *and* PHŒBE.

Mer. (*looking after them*). 'Tis pity, but the Colonel had to be saved at any cost, and as thy folly revealed our secret, thy folly must e'en suffer for it! (DAME CARRUTHERS *comes down.*) Dame Carruthers!

Dame. So this is a plot to shield this arch-fiend, and I have detected it. A word from me, and three heads besides his would roll from their shoulders!

Mer. Nay, Colonel Fairfax is reprieved. (*Aside.*) Yet if my complicity in his escape were known! Plague on the old

meddler! There's nothing for it! (*Aloud.*) Hush, pretty one! Such bloodthirsty words ill become those cherry lips! (*Aside.*) Ugh!

Dame (*bashfully*). Sergeant Meryll!

Mer. Why, look ye, chuck—for many a month I've—I've thought to myself—"There's snug love saving up in that middle-aged bosom for some one, and why not for thee—that's me—so take heart and tell her—that's thee—that thou—that's me—lovest her—thee—and—and—well, I'm a miserable old man, and I've done it—and that's me!" But not a word about Fairfax! The price of thy silence is——

Dame. Meryll's heart?

Mer. No, Meryll's *hand*.

Dame. It's the same thing!

Mer. Is it!

DUET.—MERYLL AND DAME CARRUTHERS.

Dame. Rapture, rapture!
When love's votary,
Flushed with capture,
Seeks the notary,
Joy and jollity
Then is polity;
Reigns frivolity!
Rapture, rapture!

Mer. Doleful, doleful!
When humanity,
With its soul full
Of satanity,
Courting privity,
Down declivity
Seeks captivity!
Doleful, doleful!

Dame. Joyful, joyful!
When virginity
Seeks, all coyful,
Man's affinity;
Fate all flowery,
Bright and bowery
Is her dowery!
Joyful, joyful!

Mer. Ghastly, ghastly!
When man, sorrowful,
Firstly, lastly,
Of to-morrow full,
After tarrying,
Yields to harrying—
Goes a-marrying.
Ghastly, ghastly!

FINALE.

Enter Yeomen, Women, *and* Elsie *as Bride.*

Chorus of Women.

(Elegiacs.)

Comes the pretty young bride, a-blushing, timidly shrinking—
Set all thy fears aside—cheerily, pretty young bride!
Brave is the youth to whom thy lot thou art willingly linking!
Flower of valour is he—loving as loving can be!
Brightly thy summer is shining,
Fair is the dawn of the day;
Take him, be true to him—
Tender his due to him—
Honour him, love and obey!

Trio.—Phœbe, Elsie, and Dame Carruthers.

'Tis said that joy in full perfection
Comes only once to womankind—
That, other times, on close inspection,
Some lurking bitter we shall find.
If this be so, and men say truly,
My day of joy has broken duly.
With happiness my soul is cloyed—
This is my joy-day unalloyed!

All. Yes, yes,
This is her joy-day unalloyed!

Flourish. Enter Lieutenant.

Lieut. Hold, pretty one! I bring to thee
News—good or ill, it is for thee to say.
Thy husband lives—and he is free,
And comes to claim his bride this very day!

Elsie. No! no! recall those words—it cannot be!
Leonard, my Leonard, come, oh, come to me!
Leonard, my own—my loved one—where art thou?
I knew not how I loved thine heart till now!

Ensemble.

Elsie and Phœbe.	Chorus and Others.	Lieut. and Point.
Oh, day of terror! day of tears!	Oh, day of terror! day of tears!	Come, dry these unbecoming tears,
What fearful tidings greet mine ears?	What words are these that greet our ears?	Most joyful tidings greet thine ears.
Oh, Leonard, come thou to my side,	Who is the man who, in his pride,	The man to whom thou art allied
And claim me as thy loving bride.	So boldly claims thee as his bride?	Appears to claim thee as his bride.

Flourish. *Enter* COLONEL FAIRFAX, *handsomely dressed, and attended by other* Gentlemen.

Fair. (*sternly.*) All thought of Leonard Meryll set aside.
Thou art mine own! I claim thee as my bride.
Elsie. A suppliant at thy feet I fall:
Thine heart will yield to pity's call!
Fair. Mine is a heart of massive rock,
Unmoved by sentimental shock!
All. Thy husband he!
Elsie. Leonard, my loved one—come to me,
They bear me hence away!
But though they take me far from thee,
My heart is thine for aye!
My bruised heart,
My broken heart,
Is thine, my own, for aye!
(*To* FAIRFAX.) Sir, I obey,
I am thy bride;
But ere the fatal hour
I said the say
That placed me in thy power,
Would I had died!
Sir, I obey!
I am thy bride!
(*Looks up and recognizes* FAIRFAX.) Leonard!
Fair. My own!
Elsie. Ah! (*Embrace.*)
Elsie and Fair. With happiness my soul is cloyed,
This is my joy-day unalloyed!
All. Yes! yes!
With happiness their souls are cloyed,
This is their joy-day unalloyed!
Point. Oh thoughtless crew!
Ye know not what ye do!
Attend to me, and shed a tear or two—
For I have a song to sing, O!
All. Sing me your song, O! etc.
Point. It is sung to the moon
By a love-lorn loon,
Who fled from the mocking throng, O!
It's the song of a merryman moping mum,
Whose soul was sad and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!
All. Heighdy! Heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup and he craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

Elsie. I have a song to sing, O!
All. Sing me your song, O!

Elsie. It is sung with the ring
Of the songs maids sing
Who love with a love life-long, O!
It's the song of a merrymaid, peerly proud,
Who loved a lord, and who laughed aloud
At the moan of the merryman moping mum,
Whose soul was sad and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!
All. Heighdy! Heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup and he craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

[FAIRFAX *embraces* ELSIE *as* POINT *falls insensible at their feet.*

THE GONDOLIERS;

OR,

THE KING OF BARATARIA.

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL COMIC OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

First performed at the Savoy Theatre, London, under the management of MR. R. D'OYLY CARTE, *on Saturday, December 7th,* 1889.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Duke of Plaza-Toro, *a Grandee of Spain*		Mr. Frank Wyatt.
Luiz, *his Attendant*		Mr. Brownlow.
Don Alhambra del Bolero, *the Grand Inquisitor*		Mr. Denny.
Marco Palmieri	*Venetian Gondoliers*	Mr. Courtice Pounds.
Giuseppe Palmieri		Mr. Rutland Barrington
Antonio		Mr. Medcalf.
Francesco		Mr. Rose.
Giorgio		Mr. De Pledge.
Annibale		Mr. Wilbraham.
Ottavio		Mr. C. Gilbert.
The Duchess of Plaza-Toro ...		Miss Rosina Brandram.
Casilda, *her Daughter*		Miss Decima Moore.
Gianetta	*Contadine*	Miss Geraldine Ulmar.
Tessa		Miss Jessie Bond.
Fiametta		Miss Lawrence.
Vittoria		Miss Cole.
Giulia		Miss Phyllis.
Inez, *the King's Foster-mother* ...		Miss Bernard.

Chorus of Gondoliers and Contadine, Men-at-Arms, Heralds, and Pages.

ACT I.

THE PIAZETTA, VENICE.

ACT II.

PAVILION IN THE PALACE OF BARATARIA.

An interval of three months is supposed to elapse between Acts I. and II

Date—1750.

THE GONDOLIERS;

OR,

THE KING OF BARATARIA.

ACT I.

SCENE.—THE PIAZZETTA, VENICE. *The Ducal Palace on the right.*

FIAMETTA, GIULIA, VITTORIA, *and other* Contadine *discovered, each tying a bouquet of roses.*

CHORUS OF CONTADINE.

List and learn, ye dainty roses,
Roses white and roses red,
Why we bind you into posies
Ere your morning bloom has fled.
By a law of maiden's making,
Accents of a heart that's aching,
Even though that heart be breaking,
Should by maiden be unsaid:
Though they love with love exceeding,
They must seem to be unheeding—
Go ye then and do their pleading,
Roses white and roses red!

FIAMETTA.

Two there are for whom, in duty,
Every maid in Venice sighs—
Two so peerless in their beauty
That they shame the summer skies.
We have hearts for them, in plenty,
We, alas, are four-and-twenty!
They have hearts, but all too few,
They, alas, are only two!

CHORUS.

Now ye know, ye dainty roses,
Why we bind you into posies
Ere your morning bloom has fled,
Roses white and roses red!

[*During this chorus* ANTONIO, FRANCESCO, GIORGIO, *and other* Gondoliers *have entered unobserved by the* Girls—*at first two, then two more, then four, then half-a-dozen, then the remainder of the* Chorus.

RECIT.

Franc. Good morrow, pretty maids; for whom prepare ye
These floral tributes extraordinary?
Fia. For Marco and Giuseppe Palmieri,
The pink and flower of all the Gondolieri.
Giu. They're coming here, as we have heard but lately,
To choose two brides from us who sit sedately.
Ant. Do all you maidens love them?
All. Passionately!
Ant. These gondoliers are to be envied greatly!
Gior. But what of us, who one and all adore you?
Have pity on our passion, I implore you!
Fia. These gentlemen must make their choice before you;
Vit. In the meantime we tacitly ignore you.
Giu. When they have chosen two that leaves you plenty—
Two dozen we, and ye are four-and-twenty.
Fia. and Vit. Till then enjoy your *dolce far neinte.*
Ant. With pleasure, nobody *contradicente!*

SONG.—ANTONIO AND CHORUS.

For the merriest fellows are we, tra la,
That ply on the emerald sea, tra la;
With loving and laughing,
And quipping and quaffing,
We're happy as happy can be, tra la—
As happy as happy can be!
With sorrow we've nothing to do, tra la,
And care is a thing to pooh-pooh, tra la;
And Jealousy yellow,
Unfortunate fellow,
We drown in the shimmering blue, tra la,—
We drown in the shimmering blue!

Fia. (*looking off*). See, see, at last they come to make their choice—
Let us acclaim them with united voice.

[MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *appear in gondola at back*

All the Girls. Hail, gallant gondolieri, ben' venuti!
Accept our love, our homage, and our duty.

[MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *jump ashore. The* Girls *salute them.*

DUET.—GIUSEPPE AND MARCO, WITH CHORUS OF GIRLS.

Giu. and Mar. Buon' giorno, signorine!
Girls. Gondolieri carissimi!
Siamo contadine!
Giu. and Mar. (*bowing*). Servitori umilissimi!
Per chi questi fiori—
Questi fiori bellissimi?
Girls. Per voi, bei' signori
O eccellentissimi!

[*The* Girls *present their bouquets to* GIUSEPPE *and* MARCO, *who are overwhelmed with them, and carry them with difficulty.*

Giu. and Mar. (*their arms full of flowers*). O ciel!
Girls. Buon' giorno, cavalieri!
Giu. and Mar. (*deprecatingly*). Siamo gondolieri.
(*To* FIA. *and* VIT.) Signorina, io t'amo!
Girls (*deprecatingly*). Contadine siamo.
Giu. and Mar. Signorine!
Girls (*deprecatingly*). Contadine!
(*Curtseying to* GIU. *and* MAR.) Cavalieri.
Giu. and Mar. (*deprecatingly*). Gondolieri!
Poveri gondolieri!
Chorus. Buon' giorno, signorine, etc.

DUET.—MARCO AND GIUSEPPE.

We're called *gondolieri*,
But that's a vagary,
It's quite honorary
The trade that we ply.

For gallantry noted
Since we were short-coated,
To ladies devoted,
My brother and I.

When morning is breaking,
Our couches forsaking,
To greet their awaking
With carols we come.

At summer day's nooning,
When weary lagooning,
Our mandolins tuning,
We lazily thrum.

When vespers are ringing,
To hope ever clinging,
With songs of our singing
A vigil we keep.

When daylight is fading,
Enwrapt in night's shading,
With soft serenading
We lull them to sleep.

We're called *gondolieri*, etc.

RECIT.—MARCO AND GIUSEPPE.

And now to choose our brides!
As all are young and fair,
And amiable besides,
We really do not care
A preference to declare.
A bias to disclose
Would be indelicate—
And therefore we propose
To let impartial Fate
Select for us a mate!

All. Viva!
A bias to disclose
Would be indelicate—
But how do they propose
To let impartial Fate
Select for them a mate?

Mar. These handkerchiefs upon our eyes be good enough to bind,
Giu. And take good care that both of us are absolutely blind;
Both. Then turn us round—and we, with all convenient despatch,
Will undertake to marry any two of you we catch!
All. Viva!
They undertake to marry any two of us they catch!

[*The* Girls *prepare to bind their eyes as directed.*

Tessa. (*to* MARCO). Are you peeping?
Can you see me?
Mar. Dark I'm keeping,
Dark and dreamy! [*Slyly lifts bandage.*
Vit. (*to* GIUSEPPE). If you're blinded
Truly say so.
Giu. All right-minded
Players play so! [*Slyly lifts bandage.*
Fia. (*detecting* MARCO). Conduct shady!
They are cheating!
Surely they de-
Serve a beating! [*Replaces bandage.*
Vit. (*detecting* GIUSEPPE). This too much is;
Maidens mocking—
Conduct such is
Truly shocking! [*Replaces bandage.*
All. You can spy, sir!
Shut your eye, sir!
You may use it by-and-by, sir!
You can see, sir!
Don't tell me, sir!
That will do—now let it be, sir!

All the girls. My papa he keeps three horses,
Black, and white, and dapple grey, sir;
Turn three times, then take your courses,
Catch which ever girl you may, sir!

[GIUSEPPE *and* MARCO *turn round, as directed, and try*

to catch the Girls. *Business of blind-man's buff. Eventually* MARCO *catches* GIANETTE, *and* GIUSEPPE *catches* TESSA. *The two* Girls *try to escape, but in vain. The two* Men *pass their hands over the* Girls' *faces to discover their identity.*

Giu. I've at length achieved a capture!
(*Guessing.*) This is Tessa! (*Removes bandage.*) Rapture, rapture!
Mar. (*guessing*) Gianetta fate has granted! (*Removes bandage*)
Just the very girl I wanted!
Giu. (*politely to* MAR.) If you'd rather change—
Tessa. My goodness!
This indeed is simple rudeness.
Mar. (*politely to* GIU). I've no preference whatever—
Gia. Listen to him! Well, I never!

[*Each* Man *kisses each* Girl.

Gia. Thank you, gallant *gondolieri:*
In a set and formal measure
It is scarcely necessary
To express our pride and pleasure.
Each of us to prove a treasure,
Conjugal and monetary,
Gladly will devote our leisure,
Gay and gallant *gondolieri.*
La, la, la, la, la! etc.

Tessa. Gay and gallant *gondolieri,*
Take us both and hold us tightly,
You have luck extraordinary;
We might both have been unsightly!
If we judge your conduct rightly,
'Twas a choice involuntary:
Still we thank you most politely,
Gay and gallant *gondolieri!*
La, la, la, la, la! etc.

All the Girls. To these gallant *gondolieri,*
In a set and formal measure,
It is scarcely necessary
To express their pride and pleasure.
Each of us to prove a treasure,
Conjugal and monetary,
Gladly will devote her leisure
To the other *gondolieri!*
La, la, la, la, la! etc.

All. Fate in this has put his finger—
Let us bow to Fate's decree,
Then no longer let us linger,
To the altar hurry we!

They dance off two and two—GIANETTA *with* MARCO, TESSA *with* GIUSEPPE].

Flourish. A gondola arrives at the Piazzetta steps, from which enter the DUKE OF PLAZA-TORO, *the* DUCHESS, *their daughter* CASILDA, *and their attendant* LUIZ, *who carries a drum. All are dressed in pompous, but old and faded clothes.*

ENTRÉE.

Duke. From the sunny Spanish shore,
His Grace of Plaza-Tor'—
Duch. And His Grace's Duchess true—
Cas. And His Grace's daughter, too—
Luiz. And His Grace's private drum
To Venetia's shores have come:
All. And if ever, ever, ever
They get back to Spain,
They will never, never, never
Cross the sea again!

Duke. Neither that Grandee from the Spanish shore,
The noble Duke of Plaza-Tor'—
Duch. Nor his Grace's Duchess, staunch and true—
Cas. You may add, his Grace's daughter, too—
Luiz. And his Grace's own particular drum
To Venetia's shores any more will come.
All. And if ever, ever, ever
They get back to Spain,
They will never, never, never
Cross the sea again!

Duke. At last we have arrived at our destination. This is the Ducal Palace, and it is here that the Grand Inquisitor resides. As a Castilian hidalgo of ninety-five quarterings, I regret that I am unable to pay my state visit on a horse. As a Castilian hidalgo of that description, I should have preferred to ride through the streets of Venice; but owing, I presume, to an unusually wet season, the streets are in such a condition that equestrian exercise is impracticable. No matter. Where is our suite?

Luiz (*coming forward*). Your Grace, I am here.

Duch. Why do you not do yourself the honour to kneel when you address his Grace?

Duke. My love, it is so small a matter! (*To* LUIZ.) Still, you may as well do it. (LUIZ *kneels.*)

Cas. The young man seems to entertain but an imperfect appreciation of the respect due from a menial to a Castilian hidalgo.

Duke. My child, you are hard upon our suite.

Cas. Papa, I've no patience with the presumption of persons in his plebeian position. If he does not appreciate that position, let him be whipped until he does.

Duke. Let us hope the omission was not intended as a slight. I should be much hurt if I thought it was. So would he. (*To* LUIZ.) Where are the halberdiers who were to have had the honour of meeting us here, that our visit to the Grand Inquisitor might be made in becoming state?

Luiz. Your Grace, the halberdiers are mercenary people who stipulated for a trifle on account.

Duke. How tiresome! Well, let us hope the Grand Inquisitor is a blind gentleman. And the band who were to have had the honour of escorting us? I see no band!

Luiz. Your Grace, the band are sordid persons who required to be paid in advance.

Duch. That's so like a band!

Duke (*annoyed*). Insuperable difficulties meet me at every turn!

Duch. But surely they know his Grace?

Luiz. Exactly—they know his Grace.

Duke. Well, let us hope that the Grand Inquisitor is a deaf gentleman. A cornet-à-piston would be something. You do not happen to possess the accomplishment of tootling like a cornet-à-piston?

Luiz. Alas, no, your Grace! But I can imitate a farmyard.

Duke (*doubtfully*). I don't see how that would help us. I don't see how we could bring it in.

Cas. It would not help us in the least. We are not a parcel of graziers come to market, dolt!

Duke. My love, our suite's feelings! (*To* LUIZ.) Be so good as to ring the bell and inform the Grand Inquisitor that his Grace the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Count Matadoro, Baron Picadoro—

Duch. And suite—

Duke. Have arrived at Venice, and seek—

Cas. Desire—

Duch. Demand!

Duke. And demand an audience.

Luiz. Your Grace has but to command. (*Rising.*)

Duke (*much moved*). I felt sure of it—I felt sure of it! (*Exit* LUIZ *into Ducal Palace.*) And now, my love—(*aside to* DUCHESS), shall we tell her? I think so. (*Aloud to* CASILDA.) And now, my love, prepare for a magnificent surprise. It is my agreeable duty to reveal to you a secret which should make you the happiest young lady in Venice!

Cas. A secret?

Duch. A secret which, for State reasons, it has been necessary to preserve for twenty years.

Duke. When you were a prattling babe of six months old

you were married by proxy to no less a personage than the infant son and heir of His Majesty the immeasurably wealthy King of Barataria!

Cas. Married to the infant son of the King of Barataria? It was a most unpardonable liberty!

Duke. Consider his extreme youth and forgive him. Shortly after the ceremony that misguided monarch abandoned the creed of his forefathers, and became a Wesleyan Methodist of the most bigoted and persecuting type. The Grand Inquisitor, determined that the innovation should not be perpetuated in Barataria, caused your smiling and unconscious husband to be stolen and conveyed to Venice. A fortnight since the Methodist Monarch and all his Wesleyan Court were killed in an insurrection, and we are here to ascertain the whereabouts of your husband, and to hail you, our daughter, as Her Majesty, the reigning Queen of Barataria! (*Kneels.*)

Duch. Your Majesty! (*Kneels.*)

Duke. It is at such moments as these that one feels how necessary it is to travel with a full band.

Cas. I, the Queen of Barataria! But I've nothing to wear! We are practically penniless!

Duke. That point has not escaped me. Although I am unhappily in straightened circumstances at present, my social influence is something enormous; and a Company, to be called the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Limited, is in course of formation to work me. An influential directorate has been secured, and I myself shall join the Board after allotment.

Cas. Am I to understand that the Queen of Barataria may be called upon at any time to witness her honoured sire in process of liquidation?

Duch. The speculation is not exempt from that drawback. If your father should stop, it will, of course, be necessary to wind him up.

Cas. But it's so undignified—it's so degrading! A Grandee of Spain turned into a public company! Such a thing was never heard of!

Duke. My child, the Duke of Plaza-Toro does not follow fashions—he leads them. He always leads everybody. When he was in the army he led his regiment. He occasionally led them into action. He invariably led them out of it.

SONG.—DUKE OF PLAZA-TORO.

In enterprise of martial kind,
When there was any fighting,
He led his regiment from behind—
He found it less exciting.

But when away his regiment ran,
His place was at the fore, O—
That celebrated,
Cultivated,
Underrated
Nobleman,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

All. In the first and foremost flight, ha, ha!
You always found that knight, ha, ha!
That celebrated,
Cultivated,
Underrated
Nobleman,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

When, to evade Destruction's hand,
To hide they all proceeded,
No soldier in that gallant band
Hid half as well as he did.
He lay concealed throughout the war,
And so preserved his gore, O!
That unaffected,
Undetected,
Well-connected
Warrior,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

All. In every doughty deed, ha, ha!
He always took the lead, ha, ha!
That unaffected,
Undetected,
Well-connected
Warrior,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

When told that they would all be shot
Unless they left the service,
That hero hesitated not,
So marvellous his nerve is.
He sent his resignation in,
The first of all his corps, O!
That very knowing,
Over-flowing,
Easy-going
Paladin,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

All. To men of grosser clay, ha, ha!
He always showed the way, ha, ha!
That very knowing,
Over-flowing,
Easy-going
Paladin,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

[*Exeunt* DUKE *and* DUCHESS *into Grand Ducal Palace. As soon as they have disappeared,* LUIZ *and* CASILDA *rush to each other's arms.*

RECITATIVE AND DUETTINO.—CASILDA AND LUIZ.

Oh, rapture, when alone together
Two loving hearts and those that bear them
May join in temporary tether,
Though Fate apart should rudely tear them,
Necessity, Invention's mother,
Compelled { me / thee } to a course of feigning—
But left alone with one another,
{ I will / Thou shalt } atone for { my / thy } disdaining!

Cas. Ah, well-beloved,
Mine angry frown
Is but a gown
That serves to dress
My gentleness!

Luiz. Ah, well-beloved,
Thy cold disdain,
It gives no pain—
'Tis mercy, played
In masquerade!

Both. Ah, well-beloved!

Cas. Oh, Luiz, Luiz—what have you said! What have I done! What have I allowed you to do!

Luiz. Nothing, I trust, that you will ever have reason to repent. (*Offering to embrace her.*)

Cas. (*withdrawing from him*). Nay, Luiz, it may not be. I have embraced you for the last time.

Luiz (*amazed*). Casilda!

Cas. I have just learnt, to my surprise and indignation, that I was wed in babyhood to the infant son of the King of Barataria!

Luiz. The son of the King of Barataria? The child who was stolen in infancy by the Inquisition?

Cas. The same. But, of course, you know his story.

Luiz. Know his story? Why I have often told you that my mother was the nurse to whose charge he was entrusted!

Cas. True. I had forgotten. Well, he has been discovered, and my father has brought me here to claim his hand.

Luiz. But you will not recognize this marriage? It took place when you were too young to understand its import.

Cas. Nay, Luiz, respect my principles and cease to torture me with vain entreaties. Henceforth my life is another's.

Luiz. But stay—the present and the future—*they* are mother's; but the past—that at least is ours, and none can take it from us. As we may revel in naught else, let us revel in that!

Cas. I don't think I grasp your meaning.

Luiz. Yet it is logical enough. You say you cease to love me?

Cas. (*demurely*). I say I *may* not love you.

Luiz. But you do not say you *did* not love me?

Cas. I loved you with a frenzy that words are powerless to express—and that but ten brief minutes since!

Luiz. Exactly. My own—that is, until ten minutes since, my own—my lately loved, my recently adored—tell me that until, say a quarter of an hour ago, I was all in all to thee!

[*Embracing her.*

Cas. I see your idea. It's ingenious; but don't do that.

[*Releasing herself.*

Luiz. There can be no harm in revelling in the past.

Cas. None whatever; but an embrace cannot be taken to act retrospectively.

Luiz. Perhaps not!

Cas. We may recollect an embrace—I recollect many—but we must not repeat them.

Luiz. Then let us recollect a few! (*A moment's pause, as they recollect, then both heave a deep sigh.*)

Luiz. Ah, Casilda, you were to me as the sun is to the earth!

Cas. A quarter of an hour ago?

Luiz. About that.

Cas. And to think that, but for this miserable discovery, you would have been my own for life!

Luiz. Through life to death—a quarter of an hour ago!

Cas. How greedily my thirsty ears would have drunk the golden melody of those sweet words a quarter—well it's now about twenty minutes since. (*Looking at her watch.*)

Luiz. About that. In such a matter one cannot be too precise.

Cas. Then, henceforth, our love is but a memory!

Luiz. It must be so, Casilda!

Cas. Luiz, it must be so!

DUET.—CASILDA AND LUIZ.

Luiz. There was a time—
A time for ever gone—ah, woe is me!
It was no crime
To love but thee alone—ah, woe is me!

One heart, one life, one soul,
One aim one goal—
Each in the other's thrall,
Each all in all, ah, woe is me!

Ensemble. Oh, bury, bury—let the grave close o'er
The days that were—that never will be more
Oh, bury, bury love that all condemn,
And let the whirlwind mourn its requiem!

Cas. Dead as the last year's leaves—
As gathered flowers—ah, woe is me!
Dead as the garnered sheaves,
That love of ours—ah, woe is me!
Born but to fade and die
When hope was high,
Dead and as far away
As yesterday—ah, woe is me!

Ensemble. Oh, bury, bury—let the grave close o'er, etc.

Re-enter from the Ducal Palace the DUKE *and* DUCHESS, *followed by* DON ALHAMBRA BOLERO, *the Grand Inquisitor.*

Duke. My child, allow me to present to you His Distinction Don Alhambra Bolero, the Grand Inquisitor of Spain. It was His Distinction who so thoughtfully abstracted your infant husband and brought him to Venice.

Don Al. So this is the little lady who is so unexpectedly called upon to assume the functions of Royalty! And a very nice little lady, too!

Duke. Jimp, isn't she?

Don Al. Distinctly jimp. Allow me. (*Proceeds to inspect her—she turns away scornfully.*) Naughty temper!

Duke. You must make some allowance. Her Majesty's head is a little turned by her access of dignity.

Don Al. I could have wished that Her Majesty's access of dignity had turned it in this direction. (*Aside.*) Prettily put.

Duch. Unfortunately, if I am not mistaken, there appears to be some little doubt as to His Majesty's whereabouts.

Cas. A doubt as to his whereabouts? Then I may yet be saved!

Don Al. A doubt? Oh dear, no—no doubt at all! He is here, in Venice, plying the modest but picturesque calling of a gondolier. I can give you his address—I see him every day. In the entire annals of our history there is absolutely no circumstance so entirely free from all manner of doubt of any kind whatever! Listen, and I'll tell you all about it.

SONG.—GRAND INQUISITOR.

I stole the prince, and I brought him here,
And left him, gaily prattling
With a highly respectable gondolier,
Who promised the Royal babe to rear,
And teach him the trade of a timoneer
With his own beloved bratling.

Both of the babes were strong and stout,
And, considering all things, clever.
Of that there is no manner of doubt—
No probable, possible shadow of doubt—
No possible doubt whatever.

Time sped, and when at the end of a year
I sought that infant cherished,
That highly respectable gondolier
Was lying a corpse on his humble bier—
I dropped a Grand Inquisitor's tear—
That gondolier had perished.

A taste for drink, combined with gout,
Had doubled him up for ever.
Of *that* there is no manner of doubt—
No probable, possible shadow of doubt—
No possible doubt whatever.

But owing, I'm much disposed to fear,
To his terrible taste for tippling,
That highly respectable gondolier
Could never declare with a mind sincere
Which of the two was his offspring dear,
And which the Royal stripling!

Which was which he could never make out,
Despite his best endeavour.
Of *that* there is no manner of doubt—
No probable, possible shadow of doubt—
No possible doubt whatever.

The children followed his old career—
(This statement can't be parried)
Of a highly respectable gondolier:
Well, one of the two (who will soon be here)—
But *which* of the two is not quite clear—
Is the Royal Prince you married!

Search in and out and round about
And you'll discover never
A tale so free from every doubt—
All probable, possible shadow of doubt—
All possible doubt whatever!

Cas. Then do you mean to say that I am married to one of two gondoliers, but it is impossible to say which?

Don Al. Without any doubt of any kind whatever. But be assured: the nurse to whom your husband was entrusted is

the mother of the musical young man who is such a past-master of that delicately modulated instrument. (*Indicating the drum.*) She can, no doubt, establish the King's identity beyond all question.

Luiz. Heavens, how did he know that?

Don Al. My young friend, a Grand Inquisitor is always up to date. (*To* CAS.) His mother is at present the wife of a highly respectable and old-established brigand, who carries on an extensive practice in the mountains around Cordova. Accompanied by two of my emissaries, he will set off at once for his mother's address. She will return with them, and if she finds any difficulty in making up her mind, the persuasive influence of the torture-chamber will jog her memory.

RECITATIVE.

Cas. But, bless my heart, consider my position!
I am the wife of one, that's very clear;
But who can tell, except by intuition,
Which is the Prince, and which the Gondolier?

Don All. Submit to Fate without unseemly wrangle:
Such complications frequently occur—
Life is one closely complicated tangle:
Death is the only true unraveller!

QUINTETTE.

CASILDA, DUCHESS, LUIZ, DUKE, INQUISITOR.

Try we life-long, we can never
Straighten out life's tangled skein,
Why should we, in vain endeavour,
Guess and guess and guess again?
Life's a pudding full of plums,
Care's a canker that benumbs.
Wherefore waste our elocution
On impossible solution?
Life's a pleasant institution,
Let us take it as it comes!

Set aside the dull enigma,
We shall guess it all too soon;
Failure brings no kind of stigma—
Dance we to another tune!
String the lyre and fill the cup,
Lest on sorrow we should sup.
Hop and skip to Fancy's fiddle,
Hands across and down the middle—
Life's perhaps the only riddle
That we shrink from giving up!

[*Exeunt all except* GRAND INQUISITOR *into Ducal Pala*

Enter Gondoliers *and* Contadine, *followed by* MARCO, GIANETTA, GIUSEPPE, *and* TESSA.

CHORUS.

Bridegroom and bride!
Knot that's insoluble,
Voices all voluble
Hail it with pride.
Bridegroom and bride!
Hail it with merriment;
It's an experiment
Frequently tried.

Bridegroom and bride!
Bridegrooms all joyfully,
Brides, rather coyfully,
Stand at their side.
Bridegroom and bride!
We in sincerity,
Wish you prosperity,
Bridegroom and bride!

SONG.—TESSA.

When a merry maiden marries,
Sorrow goes and pleasure tarries;
Every sound becomes a song,
All is right and nothing's wrong!
From to-day and ever after
Let our tears be tears of laughter.
Every sigh that finds a vent
Be a sigh of sweet content!
When you marry, merry maiden,
Then the air with love is laden;
Every flower is a rose,
Every goose becomes a swan,
Every kind of trouble goes
Where the last year's snows have gone!
Sunlight takes the place of shade
When you marry, merry maid!

When a merry maiden marries
Sorrow goes and pleasure tarries;
Every sound becomes a song—
All is right, and nothing's wrong.
Gnawing Care and aching Sorrow
Get ye gone until to-morrow;
Jealousies in grim array,
Ye are things of yesterday!
When you marry, merry maiden,
Then the air with joy is laden;
All the corners of the earth
Ring with music sweetly played,
Worry is melodious mirth,
Grief is joy in masquerade;

Sullen night is laughing day—
All the year is merry May!

[*At the end of the song* DON ALHAMBRA *enters at back.* *The* Gondoliers *and* Contadine *shrink from him and gradually go off, much alarmed.*

Giu. And now our lives are going to begin in real earnest. What's a bachelor? A mere nothing—he's a chrysalis. He can't be said to live—he exists.

Mar. What a delightful institution marriage is! Why have we wasted all this time? Why didn't we marry ten years ago?

Tess. Because you couldn't find anybody nice enough.

Gia. Because you were waiting for *us*.

Mar. I suppose that *was* the reason. We were waiting for you without knowing it. (DON ALHAMBRA *comes forward.* Hallo!

Giu. If this gentleman is an undertaker, it is a bad omen.

Don Al. Good morning. Festivities of some sort going on.

Giu. (*aside*). He *is* an undertaker! (*Aloud.*) No—a little unimportant family gathering. Nothing in *your* line.

Don Al. Somebody's birthday, I suppose?

Giu. Yes, mine!

Tess. And mine!

Gia. And mine!

Mar. And mine!

Don Al. Curious concidence! And how old may you be.

Tess. It's a rude question—but about ten minutes.

Don Al. Surely you are jesting?

Tess. In other words, we were married about ten minutes since.

Don Al. Married! You don't mean to say you are married.

Mar. Oh yes, we are married.

Don Al. What, both of you?

Gia. All four of us.

Don Al. (*aside*). Bless my heart, how extremely awkward!

Gia. You don't mind, I suppose?

Tess. You were not thinking of either of us for yourself, I presume? Oh, Giuseppe, look at him—he was! He's heart-broken!

Don Al. No, no—I wasn't! I wasn't! (*Aside.*) What will the Duke say?

Giu. Now, my man (*slapping him on the back*), we don't want anything in your line to-day, and if your curiosity is satisfied——

Don Al. You mustn't call me your man. It's a liberty. I on't think you know who I am.

Giu. Not we, indeed! We are jolly gondoliers, the sons of aptisto Palmieri, who led the last revolution. Republicans, art and soul, we hold all men to be equal. As we abhor pression, we abhor kings; as we detest vain-glory, we detest unk; as we despise effeminacy, we despise wealth. We are enetian gondoliers—your equals in everything except our elling, and in that at once your masters and your servants.

Don Al. Bless my heart, how unfortunate! One of you may e Baptisto's son, for anything I know to the contrary; but the her is no less a personage than the only son of the late King Barataria.

All. What!

Don Al. And I trust—I *trust* it was that one who slapped e on the shoulder and called me his man!

Giu. One of us a king!
Mar. Not brothers!
Tess. The King of Barataria!
Gia. Well, who'd have thought it!
} *Together.*

Mar. But which is it?

Don Al. What does it matter? As you are both Republicans, d hold kings in abhorrence, of course you'll abdicate at once. *Going.*)

Tes. and Gia. Oh, don't do that! (MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *stop im.*)

Giu. Well, as to that, of course there are kings and kings. When I say that I detest kings, I mean I detest *bad* kings.

Don Al. I see. It's a delicate distinction.

Giu. Quite so. Now I can conceive a kind of king—an ideal ing—the creature of my fancy, you know—who would be bsolutely unobjectionable. A king, for instance, who would bolish taxes and make everything cheap, except gondolas.

Mar. And give a great many free entertainments to the ondoliers.

Giu. And let off fireworks on the Grand Canal, and engage ll the gondolas for the occasion.

Mar. And scramble money on the Rialto among the ondoliers.

Giu. Such a king would be a blessing to his people, and if I ere a king, that is the sort of king I would be.

Don Al. Come, I'm glad to find your objections are not nsuperable.

Mar. and Giu. Oh, they're not insuperable.

Tess. and Gia. No, they're not insuperable.

Giu. Besides, we are open tc conviction. Our views may have been hastily formed on insufficient grounds. They may be crude, ill-digested, erroneous. I've a very poor opinion of the politician who is not open to conviction.

Tess. (*to* GIA.). Oh, he's a fine fellow!

Gia. Yes, that's the sort of politician for *my* money!

Don Al. Then we'll consider it settled. Now, as the country is in a state of insurrection, it is absolutely necessary that you should assume the reins of Government at once; and, until it is ascertained which of you is to be king, I have arranged that you will reign jointly, so that no question can arise hereafter as to the validity of any of your acts.

Mar. As one individual?

Don Al. As one individual.

Giu. (*linking himself with* MARCO). Like this?

Don Al. Something like that.

Mar. And we may take our friends with us, and give them places about the Court?

Don Al. Undoubtedly.

Mar. I'm convinced!

Giu. So am I!

Tess. Then the sooner we're off the better.

Gia. We'll just run home and pack up a few things. (*Going.*)

Don Al. Stop, stop—that won't do at all—we can't have any ladies. (*Aside.*) What will Her Majesty say!

All. What!

Don Al. Not at present. Afterwards, perhaps. We'll see.

Giu. Why, you don't mean to say you are going to separate us from our wives!

Don Al. (*aside*). This is very awkward! (*Aloud.*) Only for a time—a few months. After all, what is a few months?

Tess. But we've only been married half an hour! (*Weeps.*)

SONG.—GIANETTA.

Kind sir, you cannot have the heart
Our lives to part
From those to whom an hour ago
We were united!
Before our flowing hopes you stem,
Ah, look at them,
And pause before you deal this blow,
All uninvited!
You men can never understand,
That heart and hand
Cannot be separated when
We go a-yearning;

You see, you've only women's eyes
To idolize,
And only women's hearts, poor men,
To set *you* burning!
Ah me, you men will never understand
That woman's heart is one with woman's hand!

Some kind of charm you seem to find
In womankind—
Some source of unexplained delight
(Unless you're jesting),
But what attracts you, I confess,
I cannot guess,
To me a woman's face is quite
Uninteresting!
If from my sister I were torn,
It could be borne—
I should, no doubt, be horrified.
But I could bear it;—
But Marco's quite another thing—
He is my King,
He has my heart, and none beside
Shall ever share it!
Ah me, you men will never understand
That woman's heart is one with woman's hand!

FINALE.

RECITATIVE.—GRAND INQUISITOR.

Do not give way to this uncalled-for grief,
Your separation will be very brief.
To ascertain which is the King
And which the other,
To Barataria's Court I'll bring
His foster-mother;
Her former nurseling to declare
She'll be delighted.
That settled, let each happy pair
Be reunited.

Mar., Giu., Tess, Gia. Viva! His argument is strong!
Viva! We'll not be parted long!
Viva! It will be settled soon!
Viva! Then comes our honeymoon!

[*Exit* DON ALHAMBRA.

QUARTETTE.—TESSA, GIANETTA, MARCO, GIUSEPPE.

Gia. Then one of us will be a Queen,
And sit on a golden throne,
With a crown instead
Of a hat on her head,
And diamonds all her own!
With a beautiful robe of gold and green,

I've always understood;
I wonder whether
She'd wear a feather?
I rather think she should!

Luiz. Oh! 'tis a glorious thing, I ween,
To be a regular Royal Queen!
No half-and-half affair, I mean,
But a right-down regular Royal Queen!

Marco. She'll drive about in a carriage and pair,
With the King on her left-hand side,
And a milkwhite horse,
As a matter of course,
Whenever she wants to ride!
With beautiful silver shoes to wear
Upon her dainty feet;
With endless stocks
Of beautiful frocks,
And as much as she wants to eat!

All. Oh! 'tis a glorious thing, I ween, etc.

Tess. Whenever she condescends to walk,
Be sure she'll shine at that,
With her haughty stare,
And her nose in the air,
Like a well-born aristocrat!
At elegant high society talk
She'll bear away the bell,
With her "How de do?"
And her "How are you?"
And her "Hope I see you well!"

All. Oh! 'tis a glorious thing, I ween, etc.

Giu. And noble lords will scrape and bow,
And double them into two,
And open their eyes
In blank surprise
At whatever she likes to do.
And everybody will roundly vow
She's fair as flowers in May,
And say, "How clever!"
At whatsoever
She condescends to say!

Oh! 'tis a glorious thing, I ween,
To be a regular Royal Queen!
No half-and-half affair, I mean,
But a right-down regular Queen!

Enter Chorus of Gondoliers *and* Contadine.

CHORUS.

Now, pray, what is the cause of this remarkable hilarity?
This sudden ebullition of unmitigated jollity?

Has anybody blessed you with a sample of his charity?
Or have you been adopted by a gentleman of quality?

Mar. and Giu. Replying, we sing
As one individual,
As I find I'm a king
To my kingdom I bid you all.
I'm aware you object
To pavilions and palaces,
But you'll find I respect
Your Republican fallacies.

Chorus. As they know we object
To pavilions and palaces,
How can they respect
Our Republican fallacies?

MARCO AND GIUSEPPE.

For every one who feels inclined,
Some post we undertake to find
Congenial with his peace of mind—
And all shall equal be.

The Chancellor in his peruke—
The Earl, the Marquis, and the Dook,
The Groom, the Butler, and the Cook—
They all shall equal be.

The Aristocrat who banks with Coutts,
The Aristocrat who hunts and shoots,
The Aristocrat who cleans our boots—
They all shall equal be!

The Noble Lord who rules the State—
The Noble Lord who cleans the plate—
The Noble Lord who scrubs the grate—
They all shall equal be!

The Lord High Bishop orthodox—
The Lord High Coachman on the box—
The Lord High Vagabond in the stocks—
They all shall equal be!
Sing high, sing low,
Wherever they go,
They all shall equal be!

Chorus. Sing high, sing low,
Wherever they go,
They all shall equal be!

The Earl, the Marquis, and the Dook,
The Groom, the Butler, and the Cook,
The Aristocrat who banks with Coutts,
The Aristocrat who cleans the boots,
The Noble Lord who rules the State,
The Noble Lord who scrubs the grate,
The Lord High Bishop orthodox,
The Lord High Vagabond in the stocks—

Sing high, sing low,
Wherever they go,
They all shall equal be!

Then, hail! O King,
Whichever you may be,
To you we sing,
But do not bend the knee.
It may be thou—
Likewise it may be thee—
So, hail! O King,
Whichever you may be!

MARCO AND GIUSEPPE (*together*).

Then let's away—our island crown awaits me—
Conflicting feelings rend my soul apart!
The thought of Royal dignity elates me,
But leaving thee behind me breaks my heart!

[*Addressing* TESSA *and* GIANETTA

TESSA AND GIANETTA (*together*).

Farewell, my love; on board you must be getting;
But while upon the sea you gaily roam,
Remember that a heart for thee is fretting—
The tender little heart you've left at home!

Gia. Now, Marco dear,
My wishes hear:
While you're away
It's understood
You will be good,
And not too gay.
To every trace
Of maiden grace
You will be blind,
And will not glance
By any chance
On womankind!
If you are wise,
You'll shut your eyes
'Till we arrive,
And not address
A lady less
Than forty-five.
You'll please to frown
On every gown
That you may see:
And, oh, my pet,
You won't forget
You've married me!

Oh, my darling, oh, my pet,
Whatever else you may forget,
In yonder isle beyond the sea,
Oh, don't forget you've married me!

Inez. You'll lay your head
Upon your bed
At set of sun.
You will not sing
Of anything
To any one.
You'll sit and mope
All day, I hope,
And shed a tear
Upon the life
Your little wife
Is passing here.
And if so be
You think of me,
Please tell the moon:
I'll read it all
In rays that fall
On the lagoon;
You'll be so kind
As tell the wind
How you may be,
And send me words
By little birds
To comfort me!

And, oh, my darling, oh, my pet,
Whatever else you may forget,
In yonder isle beyond the sea,
Oh, don't forget you've married me!

Chorus (*during which a "Xebeque" is hauled alongside the quay*).

Then away we go to an island fair
That lies in a Southern sea:
We know not where, and we don't much care,
Wherever that isle may be.

The Men (*hauling on boat*). One, two, three,
Haul!
One, two, three,
Haul!
One, two, three,
Haul!
With a will!

All. Then away we go, etc.

SOLO.—MARCO.

Away we go
To a balmy isle,
Where the roses blow
All the winter while.

All. Then pull, yeo ho! and again yeo ho! (*Hoisting sail.*)
And again yeo ho! with a will!
When the breezes are a-blowing,
Then our ship will be a-going,
When they don't we shall all stand still!

And away we go to the island fair,
That lies in a Southern sea,
We / They } know not where, and { we / they } don't much care,
Wherever that isle may be!

[*The* Men *embark on the "Xebeque."* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *embracing* GIANETTA *and* TESSA. *The* Girls *wave a farewell to the* Men *as the curtain falls.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Pavilion in the Court of Barataria.* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE, *magnificently dressed, are seated on two thrones, occupied in cleaning the crown and the sceptre. The* Gondoliers *are discovered dressed, some as courtiers, officers of rank, etc., and others as private soldiers and servants of various degrees. All are enjoying themselves without reference to social distinctions—some playing cards, others throwing dice, some reading, others playing cup and ball, "morra," etc.*

CHORUS.

Of happiness the very pith
In Barataria you may see:
A monarchy that's tempered with
Republican Equality.
This form of government we find
The beau ideal of its kind—
A despotism strict, combined
With absolute equality!

MARCO AND GIUSEPPE.

Two kings, of undue pride bereft,
Who act in perfect unity,
Whom you can order right and left
With absolute impunity.
Who put their subjects at their ease
By doing all they can to please!
And thus, to earn their bread-and-cheese,
Seize every opportunity.

Mar. Gentlemen, we are much obliged to you for your expressions of satisfaction and good-feeling. We are delighted, at any time, to fall in with sentiments so charmingly expressed.

Giu. At the same time there is just one little grievance that we should like to ventilate.

All (*angrily*). What!

Giu. Don't be alarmed—it's not serious. It is arranged that, until it is decided which of us two is the actual King, we are to act as one person.

Giorgio. Exactly.

Giu. Now, although we act as *one* person, we are, in point of fact, *two* persons.

Annibale. Ah, I don't think we can go into that. It is a legal fiction, and legal fictions are solemn things. Situated as we are, we can't recognize two independent responsibilities.

Gui. No; but you can recognize two independent appetites. It's all very well to say we act as one person, but when you supply us with only one ration between us, I should describe it as a legal fiction carried a little too far.

Anni. It's rather a nice point. I don't like to express an opinion off-hand. Suppose we reserve it for argument before the full Court?

Mar. Yes, but what are we to do in the mean time?

Anni. I think we may take an interim order for double rations on their Majesties entering into the usual undertaking to indemnify in the event of an adverse decision?

Giorgio. That, I think, will meet the case. But you must work hard—stick to it—nothing like work.

Giu. Oh, certainly. We quite understand that a man who holds the magnificent position of King should do something to justify it. We are called "Your Majesty," we are allowed to buy ourselves magnificent clothes, our subjects frequently nod to us in the streets, the sentries always return our salutes, and we enjoy the inestimable privilege of heading the subscriptions to all the principal charities. In return for these advantages the least we can do is to make ourselves useful about the Palace.

SONG.—GIUSEPPE.

Rising early in the morning,
We proceed to light our fire,
Then our Majesty adorning
In its workaday attire,
We embark without delay
On the duties of the day.

First, we polish off some batches
Of political despatches,
And foreign politicians circumvent;
Then, if business isn't heavy,
We may hold a Royal *levée*,
Or ratify some acts of parliament.
Then we probably review the household troops—
With the usual "Shalloo humps!" and "Shalloo hoops!"

Or receive with ceremonial and state
An interesting Eastern potentate.
After that we generally
Go and dress our private *valet*—
(It's a rather nervous duty—he's a touchy little man)—
Write some letters literary
For our private secretary—
He is shaky in his spelling, so we help him if we can.
Then, in view of cravings inner,
We go down and order dinner;
Then we polish the Regalia and the Coronation Plate—
Spend an hour in titivating
All our Gentlemen-in-Waiting;
Or we run on little errands for the Ministers of State.
Oh, philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a king;
Yet the duties are delightful, and the privileges great;
But the privilege and pleasure
That we treasure beyond measure
Is to run on little errands for the Ministers of State.

After luncheon (making merry
On a bun and glass of sherry),
If we've nothing particular to do,
We may make a Proclamation,
Or receive a Deputation—
Then we possibly create a Peer or two.
Then we help a fellow-creature on his path
With the Garter or the Thistle or the Bath.
Or we dress and toddle off in semi-State
To a festival, a function, or a *fête*.
Then we go and stand as sentry
At the Palace (private entry),
Marching hither, marching thither, up and down and to and fro,
While the warrior on duty
Goes in search of beer and beauty
(And it generally happens that he hasn't far to go).
He relieves us, if he's able,
Just in time to lay the table,
Then we dine and serve the coffee, and at half-past twelve or one,
With a pleasure that's emphatic,
We retire to our attic
With the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done!
Oh, philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a King,
But of pleasures there are many and of troubles there are none;
And the culminating pleasure
That we treasure beyond measure
Is the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done!

[*Exeunt all but* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

Giu. Yet it really is a very pleasant existence. They're all so extraordinarily kind and considerate. You don't find them wanting to do this, or wanting to do that, or saying, "It's my

turn now." No, they let us have all the fun to ourselves, and never seem to grudge it.

Mar. It makes one feel quite selfish. It almost seems like taking advantage of their good nature.

Giu. How nice they were about the double rations.

Mar. Most considerate. Ah! there's only one thing wanting to make us thoroughly comfortable—the dear little wives we left behind us three months ago.

Giu. It *is* dull without female society. We can do without everything else, but we can't do without that.

Mar. And if we have that in perfection, we have everything. There is only one recipe for perfect happiness.

SONG.—MARCO.

Take a pair of sparkling eyes,
Hidden, ever and anon,
In a merciful eclipse—
Do not heed their mild surprise—
Having passed the Rubicon.
Take a pair of rosy lips;
Take a figure trimly planned—
Such as admiration whets
(Be particular in this);
Take a tender little hand,
Fringed with dainty fingerettes,
Press it—in parenthesis;—
Take all these, you lucky man—
Take and keep them, if you can!

Take a pretty little cot—
Quite a miniature affair—
Hung about with trellised vine,
Furnish it upon the spot
With the treasures rich and rare
I've endeavoured to define.
Live to love and love to live—
You will ripen at your ease,
Growing on the sunny side—
Fate has nothing more to give.
You're a dainty man to please
If you are not satisfied.
Take my counsel, happy man;
Act upon it, if you can!

Enter Chorus of Contadine, *running in, led by* FIAMETTA *and* VITTORIA. *They are met by all the* EX-GONDOLIERS, *who welcome them heartily.*

CHORUS OF CONTADINE.

Here we are, at the risk of our lives,
From ever so far, and we've brought your wives—

And to that end we've crossed the main,
And we don't intend to return again!

Fia. Though obedience is strong,
Curiosity's stronger—
We waited for long,
Till we couldn't wait longer.

Vit. It's imprudent, we know,
But without your society
Existence was slow,
And we long for variety—

All. So here we are, at the risk of our lives,
From ever so far, and we've brought your wives—
And to that end we've crossed the main,
And we don't intend to return again!

Enter TESSA *and* GIANETTA. *They rush to the arms of* GIUSEPPE *and* MARCO.

Giu. Tessa!
Tess. Giuseppe!
Gia. Marco!
Mar. Gianetta! [*Embrace.*

TESSA AND GIANETTA. (*Alternate lines.*)

After sailing to this island—
Tossing in a manner frightful,
We are all once more on dry land—
And we find the change delightful.
As at home we've been remaining—
We've not seen you both for ages,
Tell me, are you fond of reigning?
How's the food, and what's the wages?
Does your new employment please ye?—
How does Royalizing strike you?
Is it difficult or easy?
Do you think your subjects like you?
I am anxious to elicit,
Is it plain and easy steering?
Take it altogether, is it—
Better fun than gondoliering?

Chorus. We shall all go on requesting,
Till you tell us, never doubt it,
Everything is interesting,
Tell us, tell us all about it!

Is the populace exacting?
Do they keep you at a distance?
All unaided are you acting,
Or do they provide assistance?
When you're busy, have you got to
Get up early in the morning?
If you do what you ought not to,
Do they give the usual warning?

With a horse do they equip you?
Lots of trumpeting and drumming?
Do the Royal tradesmen tip you?
Ain't the livery becoming?
Does your human being inner
Feed on everything that nice is?
Do they give you wine for dinner?
Peaches, sugar-plums, and ices?

Chorus. We shall all go on requesting,
Till you tell us, never doubt it;
Everything is interesting,
Tell us, tell us all about it!

Mar. This is indeed a most delightful surprise!

Tess. Yes, we thought you'd like it. You see, it was like this: After you left we felt very dull and mopey, and the days crawled by, and you never wrote; so at last I said to Gianetta, "I can't stand this any longer; those two poor Monarchs haven't got any one to mend their stockings, or sew on their buttons, or patch their clothes—at least, I hope they haven't—let us all pack up a change and go and see how they're getting on." And she said, "Done," and they all said, "Done;" and we asked old Giacopo to lend us his boat, and *he* said, "Done;" and we've crossed the sea, and, thank goodness, *that's* done; and here we are, and—and—*I've* done!

Gia. And now—which of you is King?

Tess. And which of us is Queen?

Giu. That we shan't know until Nurse turns up. But never mind that—the question is, how shall we celebrate the commencement of our honeymoon? Gentlemen, will you allow us to offer you a magnificent banquet?

All. We will!

Giu. Thanks very much; and what do you say to a dance?

Tess. A banquet *and* a dance! Oh, it's too much happiness!

CHORUS.

We will dance a cachucha, fandango, bolero,
Old Xeres we'll drink—Manzanilla, Montero—
For wine, when it runs in abundance, enhances
The reckless delight of that wildest of dances!
To the pretty pitter-pitter-patter,
And the clitter-clitter-clitter-clatter—
Clitter—clitter—clatter,
Pitter—pitter—patter
We will dance a cachucha, fandango, bolero;
Old Xeres we'll drink—Manzanilla, Montero—
For wine, when it runs in abundance, enhances
The reckless delight of that wildest of dances!

CACHUCHA.

The dance is interrupted by the unexpected appearance of Don Alhambra, *who looks on with astonishment.* Marco *and* Giuseppe *appear embarrassed. The others run off.*

Don Al. Good evening. Fancy ball?

Giu. No, not exactly. A little friendly dance. That's all.

Don. Al. But I saw a groom dancing, and a footman!

Giu. Yes. That's the Lord High Footman.

Don Al. And, dear me, a common little drummer-boy!

Mar. Oh no! That's the Lord High Drummer Boy.

Don Al. But surely, surely the servants' hall is the place for these gentry?

Giu. Oh dear, no! *We* have appropriated the servants' hall. It's the Royal Apartment, and we permit no intruders.

Mar. We really must have some place that we can call our own.

Don Al. (*puzzled*). I'm afraid I'm not quite equal to the intellectual pressure of the conversation.

Giu. You see, the Monarchy has been re-modelled on Republican principles. All departments rank equally, and everybody is at the head of his department.

Don Al. I see.

Mar. I'm afraid you're annoyed.

Don Al. No. I won't say that. It's not quite what I expected.

Giu. I'm awfully sorry.

Mar. So am I.

Giu. By-the-by, can I offer you anything after your voyage? A plate of macaroni and a rusk?

Don Al. (*preoccupied*). No, no—nothing—nothing.

Giu. Obliged to be careful?

Don Al. Yes—gout. You see, in every Court there are distinctions that must be observed.

Giu. (*puzzled*). There are, are there?

Don Al. Why, of course. For instance, you wouldn't have a Lord High Chancellor play leapfrog with his own cook.

Giu. Why not?

Don Al. Because a High Lord Chancellor is a personage of great dignity, who should never, under any circumstances, place himself in the position of being told to tuck in his tuppenny except by noblemen of his own rank.

Giu. Oh, I take you.

Don Al. For instance, a Lord High Archbishop might tell a Lord High Chancellor to tuck in his tuppenny, but certainly not a cook.

Giu. Not even a Lord High Cook?

Don Al. My good friend, that is a rank that is not recognised at the Lord Chamberlain's office. No, no, it won't do. I'll give you an instance in which the experiment was tried.

SONG.—DON ALHAMBRA.

There lived a King, as I've been told,
In the wonder-working days of old,
When hearts were twice as good as gold,
And twenty times as mellow.
Good-temper triumphed in his face,
And in his heart he found a place
For all the erring human race
And every wretched fellow.
When he had Rhenish wine to drink
It made him very sad to think
That some, at junket or at jink,
Must be content with toddy.
He wished all men as rich as he
(And he was rich as rich could be),
So to the top of every tree
Promoted everybody.

Mar. and Giu. Now, that's the kind of King for me—
He wished all men as rich as he,
So to the top of every tree
Promoted everybody!

Lord Chancellors were cheap as sprats,
And Bishops in their shovel hats
Were plentiful as tabby cats—
In point of fact, too many.
Ambassadors cropped up like hay,
Prime Ministers and such as they
Grew like asparagus in May,
And Dukes were three a penny.
On every side Field Marshals gleamed,
Small beer were Lords Lieutenant deemed,
With Admirals the ocean teemed
All round his wide dominions.
And Party Leaders you might meet
In twos and threes in every street,
Maintaining, with no little heat,
Their various opinions.

Mar. and Giu. Now that's a sight you couldn't beat—
Two Party Leaders in each street,
Maintaining, with no little heat,
Their various opinions!

That King, although no one denies
His heart was of abnormal size,
Yet he'd have acted otherwise
If he had been acuter.

The end is easily foretold,
When every blessed thing you hold
Is made of silver, or of gold,
You long for simple pewter.
When you have nothing else to wear
But cloth of gold and satins rare,
For cloth of gold you cease to care—
Up goes the price of shoddy.
In short, whoever you may be,
To this conclusion you'll agree,
When every one is somebodee,
Then no one's anybody!

Mar. and Giu. Now that's as plain as plain can be,
To this conclusion we agree—
When every one is somebodee,
Then no one's anybody!

TESSA *and* GIANETTA *enter unobserved. The two* Girls, *impelled by curiosity, remain listening at the back of the stage.*

Don Al. And now I have some important news to communicate. His Grace the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Her Grace the Duchess and their beautiful daughter Casilda—I say their beautiful daughter Casilda—have arrived at Barataria, and may be here at any moment.

Mar. The Duke and Duchess are nothing to us.

Don Al. But the daughter—the beautiful daughter! Aha! Oh, you're a lucky fellow, one of you!

Giu. I think you're a very incomprehensible old gentleman.

Don Al. Not a bit—I'll explain. Many years ago when you (whichever you are) were a baby, you (whichever you are) were married to a little girl who has grown up to be the most beautiful young lady in Spain. That beautiful young lady will be here to claim you (whichever you are) in half an hour, and I congratulate that one (whichever it is) with all my heart.

Mar. Married when a baby!

Tess. and Gia. (*aside*). Oh!

Giu. But we were married three months ago!

Don Al. One of you—only one. The other (whichever it is) is an unintentional bigamist.

Mar. and Giu. (*bewildered*). Oh, dear me!

Tess. and Gia. (*coming forward*). Well, upon my word!

Don Al. Eh? Who are these young people?

Tess. Who are we? Why, their wives, of course. We've just arrived.

Don Al. Their wives! Oh dear, this is very unfortunate

h, dear, this complicates matters! Dear, dear, what will the Duke say?

Gia. And do you mean to say that one of these Monarchs as already married?

Tess. And that neither of us will be a Queen?

Don Al. That is the idea I intended to convey. (TESSA *and* IANETTA *begin to cry.*)

Giu. (*to* TESSA). Tessa, my dear, dear child——

Tess. Get away! perhaps it's you!

Mar. (*to* GIANETTE). My poor, poor little woman?

Gia. Don't. Who knows whose husband you are!

Tess. And pray, why didn't you tell us all about it before hey left Venice?

Don Al. Because if I had, no earthly temptation would have nduced these gentlemen to leave two such extremely fasci- ating and utterly irresistible little ladies! (*Aside.*) Neatly ut!

Tess. There's something in that.

Don Al. I may mention that you will not be kept long in suspense, as the old lady who nursed the Royal child is at resent in the Torture Chamber, waiting for me to interview er.

Giu. Poor old girl. Hadn't you better go and put her out of er suspense?

Don Al. Oh no—there's no hurry—she's all right. She has ll the illustrated papers. However, I'll go and interrogate her, nd, in the mean time, may I suggest the absolute propriety of your regarding yourselves as single young ladies.

[*Exit* DON ALHAMBRA.

Tess. Well, here's a pleasant state of things!

Mar. Delightful. One of us is married to two young ladies, nd nobody knows which; and the other is married to one young lady whom nobody can identify!

Gia. And one of us is married to one of you, and the other s married to nobody.

Tess. But which of you is married to which of us, and what's o become of the other? (*About to cry.*)

Giu. It's quite simple. Two husbands have managed to cquire three wives. Three wives—two husbands. (*Reckoning p.*) That's two-thirds of a husband to each wife.

Tess. Oh, Mount Vesuvius, here we are in arithmetic! My good sir, one can't marry a vulgar fraction!

Giu. You've no right to call me a vulgar fraction.

Mar. We are getting rather mixed. The situation is en- angled. Let's try and comb it out.

QUARTETTE.—MARCO, GIUSEPPE, TESSA, GIANETTA.

In a contemplative fashion,
And a tranquil frame of mind,
Free from every kind of passion,
Some solution let us find.
Let us grasp the situation,
Solve the complicated plot—
Quiet, calm deliberation
Disentangles every knot.

Tess. I, no doubt, Giuseppe wedded— *The Others.* In a con
That's, of course, a slice of luck. templative fashion, etc
He is rather dunder-headed,
Still distinctly, he's a duck.

Gia. I, a victim too of Cupid, *The Others.* Let us gras
Marco married—that is clear. the situation, etc.
He's particularly stupid,
Still distinctly, he's a dear.

Mar. To Gianetta I was mated; *The Others.* In a con
I can prove it in a trice: templative fashion, etc
Though her charms are overrated,
Still I own she's rather nice.

Giu. I to Tessa, willy-nilly, *The Others.* Let us gras
All at once a victim fell. the situation, etc
She is what is called a silly,
Still she answers pretty well.

Mar. Now when we were pretty babies
Some one married us, that is clear—
Gia. And if I can catch her
I'll pinch her and scratch her,
And send her away with a flea in her ear.

Giu. He, whom that young lady married,
To receive her can't refuse.
Tess. If I overtake her
I'll warrant I'll make her
To shake in her aristocratical shoes!

Gia. (*to Tess.*). If she married your Giuseppe
You and he will have to part—
Tess. (*to Gia.*). If I have to do it
I'll warrant she'll rue it—
I'll teach her to marry the man of my heart!

Tess. (*to Gia.*). If she married Messer Marco
You're a spinster, that is plain—
Gia. (*to Tess.*). No matter—no matter,
If I can get at her
I doubt if her mother will know her again!

All. Quiet, calm deliberation
Disentangles every knot!

[*Exeunt, pondering*

MARCH. *Enter procession of* Retainers, *heralding approach of* DUKE, DUCHESS, *and* CASILDA. *All three are now dressed with the utmost magnificence.*

CHORUS.

With ducal pomp and ducal pride
(Announce these comers,
O ye kettle-drummers!)
Comes Barataria's high-born bride.
(Ye sounding cymbals clang!)
She comes to claim the Royal hand—
(Proclaim their Graces,
O ye double basses!)
Of the King who rules this goodly land.
(Ye brazen brasses bang!)

Duke. This polite attention touches
Heart of Duke and heart of Duchess,
Duch. Who resign their pet
With profound regret.
Duke. She of beauty was a model
When a tiny tiddle-toddle,
Duch. And at twenty-one
She's excelled by none!
All. With ducal pomp and ducal pride, etc.

Duke (*to his attendants*). Be good enough to inform His Majesty that His Grace the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Limited, has arrived, and begs——

Cas. Desires.

Duch. Demands.

Duke. And demands an audience. (*Exeunt, attendants.*) And, now, my child, prepare to receive the husband to whom you were united under such interesting and romantic circumstances.

Cas. But which is it? There are two of them!

Duke. It is true that at present His Majesty is a double gentleman; but as soon as the circumstances of his marriage are ascertained, he will, *ipso facto*, boil down to a single gentleman—thus presenting a unique example of an individual who becomes a single man and a married man by the same operation.

Duch. (*severely*). I have known instances in which the characteristics of both conditions existed concurrently in the same individual.

Duke. Ah, he couldn't have been a Plaza-Toro.

Cas. Well, whatever happens, I shall of course be a dutiful wife, but I can never love my husband.

Duke. I don't know. It's extraordinary what unprepossessing people one can love if one gives one's mind to it.

Duch. I loved your father.

Duke. My love—that remark is a little hard, I think? Rather cruel, perhaps? Somewhat uncalled for, I venture to believe?

Duch. It was very difficult, my dear; but I said to myself, "That man is a Duke, and I *will* love him." Several of my relations bet me I couldn't, but I did—desperately!

SONG.—DUCHESS.

On the day when I was wedded
To your admirable sire,
I acknowledge that I dreaded
An explosion of his ire.
I was overcome with panic—
For his temper was volcanic,
And I didn't dare revolt,
For I feared a thunderbolt!
I was always very wary,
For his fury was ecstatic—
His refined vocabulary
Most unpleasantly emphatic.
To the thunder
Of this Tartar
I knocked under
Like a martyr;
When intently
He was fuming,
I was gently
Unassuming—
When reviling
Me completely,
I was smiling
Very sweetly:
Giving him the very best, and getting back the very worst—
That is how I tried to tame your great progenitor—at first!

But I found that a reliance
On my threatening appearance,
And a resolute defiance
Of marital interference,
And a gentle intimation
Of my firm determination
To see what I could do
To be wife and husband too,
Was all that was required
For to make his temper supple,
And you couldn't have desired
A more reciprocating couple.
Ever willing
To be wooing,
We were billing—
We were cooing;

When I merely
From him parted
We were nearly
Broken-hearted—
When in sequel
Reunited,
We were equal-
Ly delighted.

So with double-shotted guns and colours nailed unto the mast,
I tamed your insignificant progenitor—at last!

Cas. My only hope is that when my husband sees what a shady family he has married into he will repudiate the contract altogether.

Duke. Shady? A nobleman shady, who is blazing in the lustre of unaccustomed pocket-money? A nobleman shady, who can look back upon ninety-five quarterings? It is not every nobleman who is ninety-five quarters in arrear—I mean, who can look back upon ninety-five of them! And this, just as I have been floated at a premium! Oh, fie!

Duch. Your Majesty is surely unaware that directly your Majesty's father came before the public he was applied for over and over again.

Duke. My dear, her Majesty's father was in the habit of being applied for over and over again—and very urgently applied for, too—long before he was registered under the Limited Liability Act.

RECITATIVE.—DUKE.

To help unhappy commoners, and add to their enjoyment,
Affords a man of noble rank congenial employment;
Of our attempts we offer you examples illustrative:
The work is light, and, I may add, it's most remunerative!

DUET.—DUKE AND DUCHESS.

Duke. Small titles and orders
For Mayors and Recorders
I get—and they're highly delighted—
Duch. They're highly delighted!
Duke. M.P.'s baroneted,
Sham Colonel's gazetted,
And second-rate Aldermen knighted—
Duch. Yes, Aldermen knighted.
Duke. Foundation-stone laying
I find very paying:
It adds a large sum to my makings—
Duch. Large sum to his makings.
Duke. At charity dinners
The best of speech-spinners,
I get ten per cent. on the takings—
Duch. One-tenth of the takings.

Duch. I present any lady
Whose conduct is shady
Or smacking of doubtful propriety—
Duke. Doubtful propriety.
Duch. When Virtue would quash her,
I take and whitewash her,
And launch her in first-rate society—
Duke. First-rate society!
Duch. I recommend acres
Of clumsy dressmakers—
Their fit and their finishing touches—
Duke. Their finishing touches.
Duch. A sum in addition
They pay for permission
To say that they make for the Duchess—
Duke. They make for the Duchess!

Duke. Those pressing prevailers,
The ready-made tailors,
Quote me as their great double-barrel—
Duch. Their great double-barrel.
Duke. I allow them to do so,
Though Robinson Crusoe
Would jib at their wearing-apparel!
Duch. Such wearing-apparel!
Duke. I sit, by selection,
Upon the direction
Of several Companies' bubble—
Duch. All Companies' bubble!
Duke. As soon as they're floated
I'm freely bank-noted—
I'm pretty well paid for my trouble!
Duch. He's paid for his trouble!

Duch. At middle-class party
I play at *écarté*—
And I'm by no means a beginner—
Duke (*significantly*). She's not a beginner.
Duch. To one of my station
The remuneration—
Five guineas a-night and my dinner—
Duke. And wine with her dinner.
Duch. I write letters blatant
On medicines patent—
And use any other you mustn't—
Duke. Believe me, you mustn't—
Duch. And vow my complexion
Derives its perfection
From somebody's soap—which it doesn't—
Duke (*significantly*). It certainly doesn't!

Duke. We're ready as witness
To any one's fitness
To fill any place or preferment—
Duch. A place or preferment.

Duch. We're often in waiting
At junket or *fêting*,
And sometimes attend an interment—
Duke. We like an interment.
Both. In short, if you'd kindle
The spark of a swindle,
Lure simpletons into your clutches—
Yes; into your clutches.
Or hookwink a debtor,
You cannot do better
Duch. Than trot out a Duke or a Duchess—
Duke. A Duke or a Duchess!

Enter MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

Duke. Ah! their Majesties. (*Bows with great ceremony.*)

Mar. The Duke of Plaza-Toro, I believe?

Duke. The same. (MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *offer to shake hands with him. The* DUKE *bows ceremoniously. They endeavour to imitate him.*) Allow me to present——

Giu. The young lady one of us married?

[MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *offer to shake hands with her.* CASILDA *curtsies formally. They endeavour to imitate her.*

Cas. Gentlemen, I am the most obedient servant of one of you. (*Aside.*) Oh, Luiz!

Duke. I am now about to address myself to the gentleman whom my daughter married; the other may allow his attention to wander if he likes, for what I am about to say does not concern him. Sir, you will find in this young lady a combination of excellences which you would search for in vain in any young lady who had not the good fortune to be my daughter. There is some little doubt as to which of you is the gentleman I am addressing, and which is the gentleman who is allowing his attention to wander; but when that doubt is solved, I shall say (still addressing the attentive gentleman), "Take her, and may she make you happier than her mother has made me."

Duch. Sir!

Duke. If possible. And now there is a little matter to which I think I am entitled to take exception. I come here in State with Her Grace the Duchess and Her Majesty, my daughter, and what do I find? Do I find, for instance, a guard of honour to receive me? No. The town illuminated? No. Refreshment provided? No. A Royal salute fired? No. Triumphal arches erected? No. The bells set ringing? Yes—one—the Visitors', and I rang it myself. It is not enough.

Giu. Upon my honour, I'm very sorry; but, you see, I was

brought up in a gondola, and my ideas of politeness are confined to taking off my hat to my passengers when they tip me.

Duch. That's all very well, but it is not enough.

Giu. I'll take off anything else in reason.

Duke. But a Royal Salute to my daughter—it costs so little.

Cas. Papa, I don't want a salute.

Giu. My dear sir, as soon as we know which of us is entitled to take that liberty she shall have as many salutes as she likes.

Mar. As for guards of honour and triumphal arches, you don't know our people—they wouldn't stand it.

Giu. They are very off-hand with us—very off-hand indeed.

Duke. Oh, but you mustn't allow that—you must keep them in proper discipline, you must impress your Court with your importance. You want deportment—carriage—manner—dignity. There must be a good deal of this sort of thing—(*business*)—and a little of this sort of thing—(*business*)—and possibly just a *soupçon* of this sort of thing!—(*business*)—and so on. Oh, it's very useful, and most effective. Just attend to me. You are a king—I am a subject. Very good—

QUINTETTE.—DUKE, DUCHESS, CASILDA, MARCO, GIUSEPPE.

Duke. I am a courtier grave and serious
Who is about to kiss your hand:
Try to combine a pose imperious
With a demeanour nobly bland.

Mar. and Giu. Let us combine a pose imperious
With a demeanour nobly bland.

[MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *endeavour to carry out his instructions.*

Duke. That's, if anything, *too* unbending—
Too aggressively stiff and grand;
[*They suddenly modify their attitudes.*
Now to the other extreme you're tending—
Don't be so deucedly condescending!

Duch. and Cas. Now to the other extreme you're tending—
Don't be so dreadfully condescending!

Mar. and Giu. Oh, hard to please some noblemen seem!
At first, if anything, *too* unbending!
Off we go to the other extreme—
Too confoundedly condescending;

Duke. Now a gavotte perform sedately—
Offer your hand with conscious pride;
Take an attitude not too stately,
Still sufficiently dignified.

Mar. and Giu. Now for an attitude not too stately,
Still sufficiently dignified.
[*They endeavour to carry out his instructions.*

Duke (*beating time.*)
Oncely, twicely—oncely, twicely—
Bow impressively ere you glide. [*They do so.*
Capital both—you've caught it nicely!
That is the sort of thing precisely!
Duch. and Cas. Capital both—they've caught it nicely!
That is the sort of thing precisely!

Mar. and Giu. Oh, sweet to earn a nobleman's praise!
Capital both—we've caught it nicely!
Supposing he's right in what he says,
This is the sort of thing precisely!

[GAVOTTE. *At the end exeunt* DUKE *and* DUCHESS, *leaving* CASILDA *with* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

Giu. (*to* MARCO.) The old birds have gone away and left the young chickens together. That's called tact.

Mar. It's very awkward. We really ought to tell her how we are situated. It's not fair to the girl.

Giu. Undoubtedly, but I don't know how to begin. (*To* CASILDA.) A—Madam——

Cas. Gentlemen, I am bound to listen to you; but it is right to tell you that, not knowing I was married in infancy, I am over head and ears in love with somebody else.

Giu. Our case exactly! *We* are over head and ears in love with somebody else! (*Enter* TESSA *and* GIANETTA.) In point of fact, with our wives!

Cas. Your wives! Then you are married?

Tess. It's not our fault, you know. We knew nothing about it. We are sisters in misfortune.

Cas. My good girls, I don't blame you. Only before we go any further we must really arrive at some satisfactory arrangement, or we shall get hopelessly complicated.

QUINTETTE.—MARCO, GIUSEPPE, TESSA, GIANETTA, CASILDA

All. Here is a fix unprecedented!
Here are a King and Queen ill-starred!
Ever since marriage was first invented
Never was known a case so hard!
Mar. and Giu. I may be said to have been bisected,
By a profound catastrophe!

Gia., Tess., and Cass. Through a calamity unexpected
I am divisible into three!
All. Oh, moralists all,
How can you call
Marriage a state of unitee,
When excellent husbands are bisected,
And wives divisible into three?

Enter DON ALHAMBRA, *followed by* DUKE, DUCHESS, *and all the* Chorus.

FINALE.

RECITATIVE.—DON ALHAMBRA.

Now let the loyal lieges gather round—
The Prince's foster-mother has been found!
She will declare, to silver clarion's sound,
The rightful King—let him forthwith be crowned!

Chorus. She will declare, etc.

[DON ALHAMBRA *brings forward* INEZ, *the Prince's foster-mother.*

Tess. Speak, woman, speak—
Duke. We're all attention—
Gia. The news we seek—
Cas. This moment mention.
Duch. To us they bring—
Don Al. His foster-mother.
Mar. Is he the King?
Giu. Or this my brother?
All. Speak, woman, speak, etc.

RECITATIVE.—INEZ.

The Royal Prince was by the King entrusted
To my fond care, ere I grew old and crusted;
When traitors came to steal his son reputed,
My own small boy I deftly substituted!
The villains fell into the trap completely—
I hid the Prince away—still sleeping sweetly;
I called him "son" with pardonable slyness—
His name, Luiz! Behold his Royal Highness!

[*Sensation.* LUIZ *ascends the throne, crowned and robed as King.*

Cas. (*rushing to his arms*). Luiz!
Luiz. Casilda! (*Embrace.*)

All. Is this indeed the King,
Oh, wondrous revelation!
Oh, unexpected thing!
Unlooked-for situation! [*They kneel.*

MARCO, GIANETTA, GIUSEPPE, TESSA.

This statement we receive
With sentiments conflicting;
Our thoughts rejoice and grieve,
Each other contradicting;
To those whom we adore
We can be reunited—
On one point rather sore,
But, on the whole, delighted!

CASILDA, LUIZ, DUKE, AND DUCHESS.

Luiz. When others claimed thy dainty hand,
I waited—waited—waited—waited,

Duke. As prudence (so I understand)
Dictated—tated—tated—tated.

Cas. By virtue of our early vow
Recorded—corded—corded—corded,

Duch. Your pure and patient love is now
Rewarded—warded—warded—warded.

All. Then hail, O King of a Golden Land,
And the high-born bride who claims his hand!
The past is dead, and you gain your own,
A royal crown and a golden throne!

Mar. and Giu. Once more *gondolieri*,
Both skilful and wary.
Free from this quandary
Contented are we.
From Royalty flying,
Our gondolas plying
And merrily crying
Our "*premê*," "*stali!*"

All. So, good-bye cachucha, fandango, bolero—
We'll dance a farewell to that measure—
Old Xeres, adieu—Manzanilla—Montero—
We leave you with feelings of pleasure!

CURTAIN.

THE MOUNTEBANKS.

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL COMIC OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

Produced at the Lyric Theatre, London, under the management of MR. HORACE SEDGER, *on Monday, January 4th,* 1892.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ARROSTINO ANNEGATO, *Captain of the Tamorras—a Secret Society.*
GIORGIO RAVIOLI, LUIGI SPAGHETTI } *Members of his Band.*
ALFREDO, *a Young Peasant, loved by* ULTRICE, *but in love with* TERESA.
PIETRO, *Proprietor of a Troupe of Mountebanks.*
BARTOLO, *his Clown.*
ELVINO DI PASTA, *an Innkeeper.*
RISOTTO, *one of the Tamorras—just married to* MINESTRA.
BEPPO.
TERESA, *a Village Beauty, loved by* ALFREDO, *and in love with herself.*
ULTRICE, *in love with, and detested by,* ALFREDO.
NITA, *a Dancing Girl.*
MINESTRA, *Risotto's Bride.*

Tamorras, Monks, Village Girls, etc.

ACT I.

EXTERIOR OF ELVINO'S INN, ON A PICTURESQUE SICILIAN PASS. MORNING.

ACT II.

EXTERIOR OF A DOMINICAN MONASTERY. MOONLIGHT.

DATE—EARLY IN THE 19TH CENTURY.

THE MOUNTEBANKS.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*A mountain Inn on a picturesque Sicilian pass. A range of mountains, with Etna in the distance. In the middle distance, a Monastery on a steep rocky elevation.*

As the curtain rises, a procession of Dominican Monks *winds down the set pieces on to the stage.*

CHAUNT.

Miserere!
Umbra fere,
  Pauper sum diabolus.
Semper dolens—
Nolens, volens,
  Monachus moestissimus!
Quum oramus
Jejunamus—
  Eheu, otiose Deus!
Sitiens sumque,
Ac, plerumque,
  Acriter esuriens!

[*The procession of* Monks *exit. As they are going off,* GIORGIO, *a member of the Tamorra Secret Society, appears on the set, and watches them off. As soon as the coast is clear, he comes down, and beckons to the rest of the band, who, headed by* LUIGI, *appear from various entrances, and come down mysteriously.*

CHORUS OF TAMORRAS.

We are members of a Secret Society,
  Working by the moon's uncertain disc;
Our motto is "Revenge without Anxiety"—
  That is, without unnecessary risk.

We pass our nights on damp straw and squalid hay
When trade is not particularly brisk;
But now and then we take a little holiday,
And spend our honest earnings in a frisk.

SOLO.—GIORGIO.

Five hundred years ago,
Our ancestor's next door neighbour
Had a mother whose brother,
By some means or other,
Incurred three months' hard labour.

This wrongful sentence, though,
On his head he contrived to do it,
As it tarnished our scutcheon,
Which ne'er had a touch on,
We swore mankind should rue it!

All. Yes—yes—yes!
We swore mankind should rue it!

So we're members of a Secret Society,
Working by the moon's uncertain disc;
Our motto is "Revenge without Anxiety"—
That is, without unnecessary risk.

Enter from Inn, ELVINO DI PASTA.

El. Bless my heart, what are you all doing here? How comes it that you have ventured in so large a body so near to the confines of civilization? And by daylight, too! It seems rash.

Gio. Elvino, we are here under circumstances of a romantic and sentimental description. We are all going to be married!

El. What, all of you?

Lui. One each day during the next three weeks. What do you say to that?

El. Why, that it strikes at the root of your existence as a Secret Society, that's all. And who is to be the first?

Gio. The first is Risotto, who went down to the village this morning, disguised as a stockbroker, to be married to Minestra, and we expect the happy couple back every minute. The next is Giuseppe, he's to be married to-morrow, Luigi on Thursday, and so on until we are all worked off. As we are twenty-four in number, that will occupy twenty-four days, which are to be passed in unceasing revelry—and our captain, Arrostino, intends to confer upon you the benefit of our custom.

El. There I think he is right. I am out of wine just now, but I have a family prescription for fine old crusted Chianti which I will send to the nearest chemist to be compounded at

once. There's only one thing for which I must stipulate; let these revels be as joyous, as reckless, as rollicking as you please —only, let them be conducted in a whisper.

Lui. What, because we are a Secret Society? We are not as secret as all that.

El. No; but because there is a considerable portion of a poor old Alchemist on the second floor who is extremely unwell. You wouldn't go for to disturb the dying moments of a considerable portion of a poor old Alchemist?

Gio. You are unusually considerate. What's the matter with him?

El. Why, the poor old boy is continually blowing himself up with dynamite in his researches after the Philosopher's Stone. Well, that's nothing—it's all in the day's work, and he's used to it. But this time he has blown himself up worse than usual, and several of the bits are missing; if you come across anything of the kind they are his, and I'm sure you'll behave honourably, and give them up at once.

Gio. We swear.

El. Bless you! Now, the Alchemist has hitherto paid for his board and lodging in halfpence, with a written undertaking to turn them all into gold as soon as his discovery is completed; consequently the dictates of common humanity prompt us to give him every chance. (*Noise of explosion within.*) Up he goes again! Excuse me one minute, while I go and collect him.

[*Exit* ELVINO.

Enter Chorus of Village Girls, *dancing, and heralding the approach of* RISOTTO *and* MINESTRA.

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

Come all the maidens in merry community
Gay and jocose,
Hither we wend.
Risotto, Minestra, are knitted in unity;
Nobody knows
How it will end.
Risotto is handsome and really delectable—
Stalwart and tall;
Second to none.
Minestra, nice-looking and very respectable.
So we are all—
Every one.

All. So { you / we } are all—
Every one.

Enter RISOTTO *and* MINESTRA.

DUET.—RISOTTO AND MINESTRA.

Min. If you please, I'm now a member of your band—
Ris. If you please, she's—
Min. Now allow me, pray, to speak
I am married—
Ris. She's my wife, you understand.
Min. If you interrupt, I'll leave you in a week.
Ris. I really think I might—
Min. You are very impolite!
Ris. But I wanted to explain—
Min. Well, now, there you go again!
If you kindly will permit me,
I can perfectly acquit me:
I'm a lady!
Ris. She's a lady!
Min. Very good, then I refrain!
Ris. Allow me to present to you—my wife!
Min. I think you'd better keep her to yourself.
Ris. She's the treasure and the pleasure of my life—
Min. I dare say—until she's laid upon the shelf!
Ris. She's a poem, she's a song—
Min. (*relenting*). You don't mean it—go along!
Ris. I shall love her when she's grey!
Min. Will you really?—I dare say;
With your snapping and your snarling!
Ris. You're a dear, and you're a darling!
Min. Do you mean it?
Ris. Yes, I mean it!
Both. Oh, my darling! Oh, my dear!

Enter ARROSTINO.

Gio. Three secret cheers for the Captain!

All (*pianissimo*). Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

Arr. How do? How do? Ah! the bride and bridegroom Allow me. (*Kisses her.*) Charming—at least I think so another. (*Kisses her again.*) Yes, charming. Risotto, my po fellow, accept my condolences.

Ris. Condolences! You don't see anything wrong wi her?

Arr. With her? Oh no—not with *her*. My dear frien she's bewitching. (*To* MINESTRA.) You *are* bewitching, aren you?

Min. I believe I'm nice.

Arr. You do? I'm delighted to hear it on such go authority.

Ris. Still, I don't see why you should condole with me.

Arr. Don't you? Never mind—you will. Now tell m Minestra, candidly—what was it you saw in him to admir

It's not his face, of course; nor his figure—we'll put them out of the question. It can't be his conversation, because he hasn't any.

Min. I don't know. He's got a way with him.

Arr. Has he got it with him now?

Min. I don't know. I suppose so.

Arr. (*imperatively*). Risotto, give us an example of the way you have with you.

Ris. It's something like this—(*business of ogling*).

Arr. Oh, but my dear girl—really—dear, dear, dear!

Min. (*apologetically*). You've got to be nearer to him for it to tell.

Arr. Well, but even then! Now, look at it in cold blood. Think of it ten years hence—when the novelty's worn off.

Min. It does look foolish from here. Oh, I almost wish I hadn't!

Ris. My dear! (*Consoling her.*)

Min. Don't—I'm so inexperienced!

Arr. I suppose so. Pity—pity! Never mind—next time you'll be older. Now, girls, I have some news for you: the Duke and Duchess of Pallavicini are to pass through the village this evening on their way to Palermo. You don't see a real Duke and Duchess every day, so the best thing you can do is to run down and prepare to receive them.

1*st Girl.* A real Duke and Duchess! Oh, that will be delightful.

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

Only think, a Duke and Duchess!
Oh, but we are lucky lasses!
Hie we to our looking-glasses
For a few artistic touches.
Let us decorate our tresses
Ere the grand procession passes,
And receive the upper classes
In our most becoming dresses!

SOLO.—MINESTRA.

Go and wash your pretty faces,
Dress in ribbons and in laces,
Or expect from both their Graces
A well-merited rebuke;
And your hair I pray you frizz it—
For it isn't often—is it?—
That you're favoured with a visit
From a Duchess and a Duke!

CHORUS.

Yes, we'll wash our pretty faces,
Dress in ribbons and in laces,
For it isn't often—is it?—
That we're favoured with a visit
From a Duke and from a Duchess,
From a Duchess and a Duke!

[*Exeunt* Girls—*all but* MINESTRA.

Arr Now then, to business. Anything to report?

Gio. Yes. A travelling Englishman passed our encampment this morning.

Arr. Good. We have a vendetta against all travelling Englishmen. The relation of our ancestor's neighbour was arrested by a travelling Englishman. Well?

Gio. No—very bad. The cowardly ruffian was armed.

Arr. What a lily-livered hound! That's so like these Englishmen. This growing habit of carrying revolvers is the curse of our profession. Anything else?

Lui. Only an old market-woman on a mule.

Arr. Well, we have a vendetta against all old market-women on a mule. The principal evidence against the relation of our ancestor's neighbour was an old market-woman on a mule. Did you arrest her?

Lui. We were about to do so, but she passed us in silent contempt.

Arr. Humph! This growing habit of passing us in silent contempt strikes at the very root of our little earnings. Of course you could do nothing?

Gio. Nothing whatever. You see, as we are all to be married in the course of the next three weeks, we are bound as men of honour, to hand over our personal charms in the same condition of substantial and decorative repair that they were in when we captivated these confiding creatures.

Arr. Naturally. It is plain that a man who offers a girl his hand, and comes to claim her with his arm amputated at the shoulder, is no longer in a position to fulfil his contract. A man who proposes with a Roman nose and turns up at the altar with a snub is guilty of flat dishonesty, on the face of it. At the same time, that's no reason why you shouldn't pick off the bits of cotton wool in which you are in the habit of putting yourselves away at night. (*Picking scraps of wool from the coats of* PIETRO *and* GIORGIO.) To people who are unacquainted with the circumstances it might look a little unmanly. I don't know—perhaps not. (*Replacing the scraps of wool on their coats.*) However, take heart. I have an enterprise in hand which

promises the very maximum of profit with the very minimum of risk. The Duke and Duchess—I believe we have a vendetta against all Dukes and Duchesses?

Gio. The judge who sentenced the relation of our ancestor's neighbour would have been a duke if they had created him one.

Arr. The scoundrel! Then I intend to secure this Duke and Duchess.

Gio. Ah! But how? Remember the motto of our band—"Heroism without risk."

Arr. We shall do it diplomatically, of course. In the first place, we shall seize on yonder monastery——

Lui. When the monks are asleep?

Arr. Why, of course—and dress ourselves in their robes. In the mean time, Minestra, disguised as an old woman, will lure the Duke away from his escort and into our power.

Min. *I* think I could do it better as a *young* woman.

Arr. Nonsense, you little goose—you know nothing at all about it! Listen!

SONG.—ARROSTINO.

The Duke and the Duchess as they travel through the lands
With the clips of their whips and their high jerry ho!
Will pass by the rock where that monastery stands,
In a first-class fine-folk fashion,
With their high jerry ho!
Their postilion in vermilion
And the rattle of their cattle,
And their high jerry ho!

Chorus. With their high jerry ho! etc.

Minestra they'll find as a tottering old crone,
With her moans and her groans and her high jerry ho!
Who has tumbled down the rock, and is lying all alone,
And her cries will excite their compassion—
With her high jerry ho!
And her cropper so improper,
And her fussy, "Lawk ha' mussy,"
And her high jerry ho!

Chorus. With her high jerry ho! etc.

She'll beg that the Duke will convey her to the friars,
With their splint and their lint and their high jerry ho!
Then he'll take her up at once through the brambles and the briars;
And her woes to the monks she'll explain them.
With their high jerry ho!
With their wrappings and their strappings,
With their cackle on diachylon—
Their high jerry ho!

Chorus. With their high jerry ho! etc.

By this time the monks will have fallen in our clutches,
With their cries of surprise and their high jerry ho!
And, disguised in their robes, we'll receive the Duke and
Duchess;
And in custody close we'll detain them,
With their high jerry ho!
And the pusses of those cusses,
And a ransom very handsome
And a high jerry ho!

Chorus. With their high jerry ho! etc.

[*Exeunt all.*

Enter ALFREDO.

RECITATIVE.—ALFREDO.

Teresa! little word so glibly spoken!
Take pity on a heart that's all but broken!
Teresa! one-word poem trisyllabic;
An Eastern ode in sensuous *Arabic*—
Would that thou wert as tender in thy nature
As in thy soft and tender nomenclature!

BALLAD.—ALFREDO.

Bedecked in fashion trim,
With every curl a-quiver;
Or leaping, light of limb,
O'er rivulet and river;
Or skipping o'er the lea
On daffodil and daisy;
Or stretched beneath a tree,
All languishing and lazy—
Whatever be her mood;
Be she demurely prude,
Or languishingly lazy;
My lady drives me crazy
In vain her heart is wooed,
Whatever be her mood!

What profit should I gain
Suppose she loved me dearly?
Her coldness turns my brain
To *verge* of madness merely.
Her kiss—though, Heaven knows,
To dream of it were treason—
Would tend, as I suppose,
To utter loss of reason!
My state is not amiss;
I would not have a kiss
Which, in or out of season,
Might tend to loss of reason:
What profit in such bliss?
A fig for such a kiss!

Alf. What shabby things a man will do when he's eaten up

with jealousy! But what a comfort those shabby things are to him! To prevent Teresa joining the Tamorras with the other girls, I was mean enough to bribe a farm girl to lock her in her room! I'm disgusted with myself for having stooped to such a contemptible act. Still, I'm very glad I did it.

Enter TERESA.

Alf. Teresa! *You* here?

Ter. Didn't expect me, I fancy?

Alf. No—I——

Ter. Locked me in my room, didn't you? Well, I escaped through the window.

Alf. Never thought of the window! However, you are too late—the Tamorras have gone. Ah! forgive me; I couldn't bear the thought of your spending the day with them.

Ter. My dear Alfredo, now do you really think I am the sort of girl who would throw herself away upon a contemptible outlaw? Why, I'd much sooner marry *you!*

Alf. (*delighted*). You would? My darling! (*Putting his arm round her.*)

Ter. Infinitely. Don't!

Alf. Why not?

Ter. It's a liberty.

Alf. But after the tender avowal you have just made, surely I may be permitted——

Ter. My dear Alfredo, you jump at conclusions. I said I would rather throw myself away on a respectable young farmer than on a contemptible outlaw. But I haven't the smallest intention of throwing myself away on either.

Alf. Teresa, have some pity on me; I am so desperately in love with you. I have founded my hopes of happiness upon you, for you are the very air I breathe, the very sunlight of my life!

Ter. You are, of course, quite at liberty to profit by any light I may happen to emit; but without wishing to say a word that would hurt your feelings, it is only right to tell you that I look a great deal higher than a mere clodhopper. For you do hop clods, you know.

Alf. I have certainly hopped some in my time.

Ter. It's not my own idea. To be quite candid with you, I have often wondered what people can see in me to admire. Personally, I have a poor opinion of my attractions. They are not at all what I would have chosen if I had had a voice in the matter. But the conviction that I am a remarkably attractive girl is so generally entertained that, in common modesty, I feel

bound to yield to the pressure of popular sentiment, and to look upon myself as an ineffective working minority.

Alf. But you used to like me.

Ter. Decidedly. Personally, I entertain a great admiration for you. *I* think you extremely good-looking.

Alf. (*delighted*). Teresa!

Ter. But the general opinion on the subject of your good looks is so entirely against me that (again regarding myself as an ineffective working minority) I feel bound to yield to the pressure of popular prejudice, and admit that you cannot be as good-looking as I feel sure you are.

Alf. (*despondingly*). Perhaps not.

BALLAD.—TERESA.

It's my opinion—though I own
In thinking so I'm quite alone—
In some respects I'm but a fright.
You like my features, I suppose?
I'm disappointed with my nose:
Some rave about it—perhaps they're right.
My figure just sets off a fit;
But when they say it's exquisite
(And they *do* say so), that's too strong.
I hope I'm not what people call
Opinionated! After all,
I'm but a goose, and may be wrong!

When charms enthral
There's some excuse
For measures strong;
And, after all,
I'm but a goose,
And may be wrong!

My teeth are very neat, no doubt;
But, after all, they *may* fall out:
I think they will—some think they won't.
My hands are small, as you may see,
But not as small as they might be,
At least, *I* think so—others don't.
But there, a girl may preach and prate
From morning six to evening eight,
And never stop to dine,
When all the world, although misled
Is quite agreed on any head—
And it is quite agreed on mine!

All said and done,
It's little I
Against a throng
I'm only one,
And possibly
I may be wrong!

Ter. Now, come and talk it over, like a sensible boy. (*They sit—he at her feet.*) Come, tell me all about it. You know you used always to confide your little troubles to me.

Alf. I've nothing to say, except that I'm over head and ears in love with you.

Ter. Now, first of all, you mustn't say "you;" it's too personal. Say, "I'm over head and ears in love with Teresa!"

Alf. Well, so I am.

Ter. Poor boy! Well, I can quite understand it, for, with all her faults, she's far and away the nicest girl hereabouts. Now, look at it sensibly. If you, a plain young man, married a conspicuous beauty (for, after all's said and done, that's what it comes to), you would be under a perpetual disadvantage from sheer force of contrast; and as for jealousy—well, I've known Teresa since she was quite a little girl, and, take my word for it, she would keep you on chronic tenterhooks. Now, if you married a thoroughly plain girl—like Elvino's niece Ultrice, for instance—

ULTRICE *enters, and overhears what follows.*

who couldn't possibly, under any circumstances, give you the least uneasiness on the score of her personal attractions—you might count on being as happy as two thoroughly unattractive little birds could reasonably expect to be.

Alf. Ultrice! What do I want with Ultrice? She follows me everywhere. She worries my life out.

Ter. Ultrice is quite a good sort of girl; and as to her personal appearance, why, you'd get used even to that in a couple of years!

ULTRICE *comes forward.*

QUARTETTE.—ULTRICE, TERESA, ALFREDO, AND AFTERWARDS ELVINO.

Ult. Upon my word, miss!
Ter. Oh, it's you, miss!
How d'ye do, miss?
Didn't know you
Overheard, miss!
Ult. Oh, you spiteful—
Ter. (*curtseying*). How politeful!
Ult. One I owe you,
You tittling, tattling, reckless, rattling, twopenny-ha'penny parcel of vanity!
Ter. High gentility, amiability, both combined with true humility!
Ult. You mischief-making, character-taking, clicking clacking bit of inanity!
Ter. Play propriety, or society may suppose it's inebriety.

Alf. Now, ladies, pray you, listen to me.
Dicky-birds in their nests agree.
If they can do so, do so too.
Ter. and Ult. What has it, pray, to do with you?
Ult. Dicky-birds don't, to gain their ends,
Depreciate their absent friends.
Ter. Dicky-birds don't, whate'er they hear,
Forget that they are *ladies*, dear!
All Three. Dicky-birds tweetle, tweetle tweek,
Which may be silly, and does sound weak;
But dickey-birds don't, whate'er they hear,
Forget that they are *ladies*, dear!

Enter ELVINO.

El. Now, pray you, attention! I've something to mention
That ought your approval to win—
Ult. (*interrupting*). And dicky-birds never, or rarely, endeavour—
El. Now, ladies, a truce to this din!
Ter. (*interrupting*). And dicky-birds don't—
El. Be quiet!
Ter. I won't!—
El. My fortune's about to begin—
The Duke and Duchess (their quality such is)—
Themselves, and their kith and kin—
Ult. (*interrupting*). And dicky-birds try to—
Ter. (*interrupting*). And you too—and I too—
El. Are going to stop at the inn!
All Three. What!
El. They're going to stop at the inn!
All Three. What!
El. They're going to stop at the inn!
Ult. The Duke and Duchess fall into our clutches?
A penance, no doubt, for some sin!
Ter. Perhaps it's his figure, too portly for vigour,
He's stout, and he wants to be thin!
Alf. At least their intention shows great condescension,
For comfort they can't care a pin:
Indifferent eating—
Ult. Hard beds and damp sheeting—
Ter. (I hope they've some Keating)—
All Three. Afford a poor greeting
To people who stop at this inn!

ELVINO.	THE OTHERS.
For excellent eating,	Indifferent eating.
Good beds and warm sheeting,	Hard beds and damp sheeting
That never want Keating,	(I hope they've some Keating),
Afford a good greeting	Afford a poor greeting
To people who stop at my inn!	To people who stop at this inn!

El. I don't know how I shall accommodate them. My only bedroom is occupied by the exploded Alchemist, who is much

too incomplete to be moved. There's the scullery. Do you think they'd put up with a shakedown in the scullery?

Alf. I don't know. The Duke is an awful stickler for etiquette.

Ult. He gave an inkeeper at Palermo six months because he used his pocket-handkerchief in his presence.

Ter. And he fined the Mayor of Syracuse a hundred crowns because he didn't.

El. This is terrible. I know I shall make some fearful mistake with these people! I've never in my life addressed anybody of higher rank than an Oil and Italian Warehouseman!

Alf. My good sir, they're not people—they're Personages.

El. Of course they are! There I go—putting my foot into it at the first go off! If I could only practise a little! Now, if you'd be so kind—so very kind—as to impersonate the Duke, just for a dress rehearsal of the reception (I've got a lot of beautiful clothes left behind by some strolling players in pawn for their bill), you shall be treated with all the consideration due to your exalted rank, and have the entire run of the bar, except rum-shrub!

Alf. It's a tempting offer. But I must have a Duchess.

El. Of course you must. (*Aside.*) How many Duchesses go to a Duke?

Alf. Only one at a time.

El. You don't say so?

Alf. Yes—Dukes are very particular about that.

El. Dear me! (*Aloud.*) Well, here are two to choose from—my cousin Teresa and my niece Ultrice—both charming.

Ult. and Ter. What's that?

El. Well, one charming and one—umph! Will that do?

Ult. and Ter. That will do.

El. Now, come; we've no time to lose. Choose your Duchess and begin.

QUARTETTE.—ALFREDO, ULTRICE, TERESA, AND ELVINO.

Alf. (*to* TERESA.) Fair maid, take pity on my state!
Look down with eyes compassionate
On my condition lonely;
Nor think me too impertinent,
If I implore you to relent,
And my sweet Duchess represent
On this occasion only!

Ter. I thank you, sir; but it would be
Presumptuous, indeed, in me
To personate a Duchess.
But I know one who'd have the face
To jump at mimicking her Grace
No compliment seems out of place
Her vanity that touches.

Ult. D'you mean me, miss?
Ter. I mean you, miss,
All above.
Ult. You're too free, miss.
Ter. Try it, do, miss—
There's a love!
Ult. I agree, miss!
Ter. That's explicit:
Take your ground!
Ult. You shall see, miss.
Ter. Wouldn't miss it
For a pound!
Ult. Though your spite all bounds surpasses,
Pay attention, I beseech you.
Manners of the upper classes
I shall be most pleased to teach you.
Ter. Thank you, dear—pray, take your station—
Malice soon will spread the rumour
It will be a personation
Teeming with unconscious humour!

ENSEMBLE.

ULTRICE.
Watch me as I take my station,
Spread abroad the welcome rumour.
No attempt at provocation
Touches my extreme good humour.

ALFREDO, TERESA, AND ELVINO.
Watch her as she takes her station,
Malice soon will spread the rumour.
It will be a personation
Teeming with unconscious humour.

Ult. Now, look at me,
And you will see
How ladies grand
Present their hand;
It's copied from the highest ladies in the land.
Ter. I always thought
A lady ought
To walk with grace
And not grimace;
But that, it's very evident, is not the case.
Ult. Then as they walk,
They blandly talk,
And look at us
With eye-glass—thus—
And what they'll have for dinner they, perhaps, discuss.
Ter. It would appear
They flout and fleer,
Stick up their nose,
Turn in their toes—
You're teaching me gratuitously, I suppose?
Ult. Then as she takes her place upon the throne that is prepared,
The people bow them to the ground, and every head is bared,

They keep their proper places as she looks them through and through—

Ter. And I suppose they try to keep their countenances too?
If that is what is called Court etiquette, it's very plain
The ways of high society I never shall attain;
It seems you must be ill-bred, and as awkward as can be,
Which is A B C to you, my love, but difficult for me.

[*Exeunt* ELVINO, *bowing before* ALFREDO *and* ULTRICE, TERESA *following and mimicking* ULTRICE'S *walk and gestures.*

Charivari without. *Enter* Chorus of Girls, *running and heralding the approach of* PIETRO, BARTOLO, *and* NITA. PIETRO *is driving a Palermo donkey-cart.* BARTOLO *is dressed as a clown,* NITA *as a rope-dancer.* BARTOLO *carries a big drum and Pandean pipes.*

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

Tabor and drum!
Mummers have come!
Hey for their mummery,
Frolic and flummery!
For to my dull
Countrified skull
Nothing sublunary
Equals buffoonery!
Folk of our kind
Frequently find
Jokes that are sensible
Incomprehensible.
Here, I admit,
Genuine wit,
As a commodity,
Ranks below oddity.

SOLO (PIETRO) AND CHORUS.

Come, strike up, Mr. Marriman, while I inform the universe,
In metrical and tuny verse—

Bar. In metrical and tuny verse—

Pie. That here's an exhibition that's highly intellectual—
To see it we expect you all—

Bar. To see it we expect you all.

Pie. Come, empty all your pockets, for I'm not a common mountebank,
I've money in the County Bank—

Bar. He's money in the County Bank.

Pie. And I can give you value for your coppers insignificant—
And I'll return 'em *if* I can't—

Bar. And he'll return 'em *if* he can't.

SONG.—BARTOLO.

Though I'm a buffoon, recollect
I command your respect!
I cannot for money
Be vulgarly funny,
My object's to make you reflect!

True humour's a matter in which
I'm exceedingly rich.
It ought to delight you,
Although, at first sight, you
May not recognize it as sich.

Other clowns make you laugh till you sink,
When they tip you a wink;
With attitude antic,
They render you frantic—
I don't. I compel you *to think!*

For, oh, this is a world of insincerity and trouble,
And joy is imbecility, and happiness a bubble,
And you're a lot of butterflies who flutter through a summer,
And he's a mountebank, and I'm a miserable mummer!

All. It's possible the world is insincerity and trouble,
And happiness, for all I know, is nothing but a bubble;
Perhaps we may be butterflies who flutter through a summer,
But you're, without a doubt, a *very* miserable mummer!

Nita (dancing). I've a dance
That came from France
Not long ago—
It's worthy of your silver and your copper.
It's my own,
And I alone
Its mazes know—
It's graceful and particularly proper.
I assist
As soloist,
Upon a squeeze,
On the trumpet and the kettledrum sonorous.
I've a song
That's just as long
As you may please—
Twenty verses, and each verse has got a chorus!

All. Now that's the kind of merriment you ought to set before us;
Only fancy—twenty verses, and each verse has got a chorus.
To such an entertainment we could listen for a summer;
But save us from the humour of this melancholy mummer!

Pie. Oh, you lucky people! Oh, you fortunate villagers! A perfectly remote and altogether obscure corner of Europe favoured with the presence of a company of artists whom all the crowned heads of Europe are quarrelling to possess! (*To* BARTOLO.) Solo, if you please, expressive of a general withdrawal of ambassadors

from all the European Courts. (*Flourish.*) The Czar of Russia is no longer on terms with the Empress of New York because I visited her first. A lady, you know! As a man of gallantry I couldn't refuse. But, mum! I must be discreet. (*To* BARTOLO.) Solo, if you please, expressive of the honourable silence of a self-respecting man of gallantry. (BARTOLO *flourishes his drumsticks and pretends to play Pandean pipes, but without eliciting any sound.*) Now, what do you think we come for?

All. Gold!

Pie. Gold? Bah! Try again.

All. Silver!

Pie. Silver? Why, we're sick of gold and silver!

Bar. Could you oblige me with my last week's salary?

Pie. Gold! (*Taking a handful from his pocket and looking at it in disgust.*) Ugh! (*Shuddering.*) Here—catch! (*About to throw it to them.*) Stop! On second thoughts it will only give you ideas above your station. But, come—I will be frank with you. The greatest men have their weaknesses, and I have mine. I have been cursed through life with a morbid craving for copper! I was cradled in a copper. I have frequently been taken up by a copper. A bull once tossed me for a copper. "Heads!" I cried. I came down tails, and he won. I was hurt. I felt it very much. (*To* BARTOLO.) Solo, if you please, expressive of feelings that may be more easily imagined than described. (*Flourish.*) Now to business. At half-past three will be presented a dress rehearsal of the performance to be given before the Duke and Duchess of Pallavicini, comprising an exhibition of conjuring, necromancy, spirit manifestations, thought-reading, hypnotism, mesmeric psychology, psychography, sensory hallucination, dancing on the slack wire and ground, and lofty tumbling. Also will be exhibited the two world-renowned life-size clockwork automata, representing Hamlet and Ophelia (*unrolling two posters representing the figures*) as they appeared in the bosoms of their families before they disgraced their friends by taking to the stage for a livelihood. The price of admission will be one penny for the aristocracy, members of the upper middle classes half price. At half-past five. Be in time—be in time—be in time!

[*During this speech* PIETRO *has frequently refreshed himself from a large wine-skin, which is also referred to by* BARTOLO *when* PIETRO *is not looking.*

Chorus. Now that's the sort of merriment you ought to set before us;
To mark our approbation we'll extemporize a chorus.
To such an entertainment we could listen for a summer;
But save us from the humour of that melancholy mummer!

[*Exeunt Village* Girls.

Pie. Humph! Not a remunerative lot, I fancy. But if the Duke, who is a mad enthusiast in the matter of automata, should take a fancy to our Hamlet and Ophelia, he'll buy them, and ourfortune's made! By-the-by, where's Beppo with the figures?

Ni. Bless you, he couldn't be here yet—all uphill.

Pie. True. Nita!

Ni. Well. (*She is talking to* BARTOLO.)

Pie. Not quite so near Bartolo, please.

Ni. Oh, I forgot—force of habit.

Pie. You must recollect that you are no longer engaged to be married to him. That's over. You are engaged to be married to *me*, now. Try and remember it—*were* to him, *are* to me. It's quite easy, if you put it like that. Thank you. (*Leads donkey off.*)

Ni. Yes, but it's *not* so easy. A girl who's been deeply in love with a gentleman for the last six months may be forgiven if she forgets, now and then, that she doesn't care a bit for him any more.

Bar. (*gloomily*). We were happy!

Ni. Very! (*Sighing.*)

Bar. How we carried on!

Ni. Didn't we!

Bar. Do you remember when I used to go like *that* to you?

Ni. Don't I! (*Sighing.*)

Bar. Does *he* ever go like that to you?

Ni. Not he—he doesn't know how.

Bar. And yet we have a School Board! How you loved me!

Ni. Yes; but when I loved you you told me you were a leading tragedian. But a clown—I really don't see how I *could* love a clown.

Bar. I didn't deceive you. I've played the first acts—and the first alone—of all our tragedies. No human eye has seen me in the second act of anything! My last appearance was three months agone. I played the moody Dane. As no one else had ever played him, so I played that Dane. Gods! how they laughed! I see them now—I hear their ribald roars. The whole house rocked with laughter! I've a soul that cannot brook contempt. "Laugh on!" I said; "laugh on, and laugh your fill—you laugh your last! No man shall ever laugh at me again—I'll be a clown!" I kept my word—they laugh at me no more.

Enter BEPPO, *running and meeting* PIETRO.

Bep. (*breathless*). Oh, master! here's a misfortune—here's a calamity!

Pie. Eh? What's the matter? Where are the figures?

Bep. They're at Palermo!

Pie., Bar., and Ni. What!

Bep. It's no fault of mine. They've been detained by the police because they hadn't any passports.

Ni. That's because they're so life-like. After all, it's a compliment.

Pie. A compliment! Yes; but we can't dine on cold compliments. (*To* BEPPO.) Didn't you open the figures and show their clockwork insides?

Bep. Yes; but the police said that was no rule, they might be foreigners.

Pie. Very true—so they might.

Bar. Chock-full of eccentric wheels—might almost be English. What's to be done?

Enter ELVINO *and* ULTRICE.

El. Here's a misfortune!

Ult. Here's a calamity!

Pie. What, another?

El. We're ruined—ruined!

Bar. What is the matter with the licensed victualler?

Ult. The Alchemist—it's all over—he's gone! The last explosion did it!

El. And this (*producing halfpence*) is all I've been paid for six weeks' board, lodging, and medical attendance!

Pie. It seems cheap. But you can seize his effects.

El. I've seized 'em! Here they are (*producing medicine phial with label*)—all he possessed in the world—a bottle of medicine with a label on it!

Pie. What's this?

El. Read it—our education's not what it was.

Pie. (*pretending to read label*). "Two tablespoonfuls, at bed-time."

El. Is that all?

Pie. Here's a greedy fellow!

El. But I say—it takes a lot of writing to say that.

Pie. Well, it's a very strong medicine.

El. Oh, I see.

Ult. (*aside*). *I* don't.

Pie. (*returning it*). Take it.

El. Thankye; take it yourself—it will do you good.

[*Exit* ELVINO, ULTRICE *remains listening unobserved.*

Pie. (*changing his manners*). Has he gone? Come here; there's more in this than meets the eye!

Ni. What, more than two tablespoons?

Pie. More than two fiddlesticks! Listen to this. (*Reads.*) "*Man is a hypocrite, and invariably affects to be better and wiser than he really is. This liquid, which should be freely diluted, has the effect of making every one who drinks it exactly what he pretends to be. The hypocrite becomes a man of piety; the swindler, a man of honour; the quack, a man of learning; and the braggart, a man of war.*"

Ult. (*aside*). I thought as much—this may be useful.

[*Exit* ULTRICE.

Pie. Now the question is—what's to be done with it?

Ni. Give some to Bartolo, and make him funny!

Bar. Naughty sly-boots!

Pie. Give some to Bartolo? Yes, and give some to Nita, too. Don't you understand?

Ni. Candidly, no.

Pie. Why, the Duke and Duchess want to buy the figures, and the figures are missing. What's to be done? Why, it's obvious. You and Bartolo dress and make up as the two figures—when dressed, you drink a few drops of the potion, diluted with wine. (*Tasting the cork and shuddering.*) It's—it's not at all nasty—and you will not only look like the two figures, but you'll actually *be* the two figures—clockwork and all!

Ni. Whew! (*Whistles.*)

Bar. What! I become a doll—a dandled doll? A mere conglomerate of whizzing wheels, salad of springs and hotch-potch of escapements? Exchange all the beautiful things I've got inside here for a handful of common clockwork? It's a large order. Perish the thought and be who uttered it!

Pie. Come, come! The figures are our joint property, and we are all equally interested in selling them.

Ni. That's true. Well, I've no objection. Besides, it will be fun.

Pie. Good girl! The potion must be diluted, so I'll pour it into this wine-skin and we can draw it off as we want it. (*Does so.*)

Ni. But stop a bit. I don't want to be clockwork all my life! How are we to get back again?

Pie. I never thought of that!

Ni. It wouldn't do at all

Pie. Oh, not at all. Perhaps it says. (*Refers to label.*) Yes! (*Reads.*) "*If the charm has been misapplied, matters can be restored to their original condition by burning this label.*" There you are—nothing could be simpler.

Ni. I say—don't lose that.

Pie. Not if I know it. (*Puts it in his pocket-book, which he places in his pocket.*) I shall be back in a minute, and, in the mean time, try and wheedle him into joining us.

[*Exit* PIETRO.

Bar. (*who has been fuming in silence*). I protest! It is an indignity! I have a soul that cannot brook an indignity!

Ni. An indignity? Nonsense—just think—you'll appear as Hamlet, your favourite character, before the Duke—complete dress—scene from the second act, too—

Bar. Ha!

Ni. I shall be desperately in love with you—and you with me—we shall bill and we shall coo, and we shall be as happy as two little birds.

Bar. Can clockwork coo? A nice point.

Ni. Ah! There *was* a time when you wouldn't refuse me anything.

Bar. Yes, but then you used to coax me. I have a soul that can do nothing unless it's coaxed.

Ni. Then sit down, and I'll coax you.

Bar. Coax me hard.

Ni. Oh, very hard! (*Business.*)

Bar. Oh, coax me harder than that!

Ni. Will *that* do? (*Business.*)

Bar. That sort of thing, prolonged indefinitely, will do.

[*During this* PIETRO *has been occupied in hanging up the posters on each side of the Inn door. Exit* PIETRO *into Inn.*

SONG.—NITA.

Those days of old
How mad were we
To banish!
Thy love was told,
Querido mi,
In Spanish—
And timid I,
A-flush with shame
Elysian,
Could only sigh,
Dieu, comme je t'aime!
(Parisian.)

No matter, e'en
Hadst thou been coined
A Merman,
Thou wouldst have been
Mein lieber freund—
(That's German.)
Thy face, a-blaze
With loving pats,
Felt tinglish,
For in those days
I loved thee—that's
Plain English!

[*During this* BARTOLO *has gradually yielded to* NITA'S *blandishments, and at the end expresses, in gesture, his acquiescence with her wishes.* PIETRO *re-enters from Inn.*

DANCING TRIO.—PIETRO, NITA, AND BARTOLO.

Pie. (*enters, dancing*). Allow that the plan I devise
Is new and sufficiently clever
To testify joy and surprise,
Perhaps you will kindly endeavour?

Bar. and Nita (*dancing*). With anything clever or wise,
I never should credit you—never.
To testify joy and surprise,
Observe our united endeavour.
[*Dance*—NITA *stops suddenly.*

Nita. But what a catastrophe! Stop!
[BARTOLO *and* PIETRO *stop dancing.*
I see of objections a crop.
Suppose, by some horrible fluke,
I should chance to be bought by the Duke!

Pie. (*resuming his dance*). Be easy, I'll certainly see
You'll never get into his clutches.

Bar. (*dancing*). But don't be alarmed about me—
I should like to be bought by the Duchess!
I have certain society touches
That ought to appeal to a Duchess.
Though pride I abhor,
I've a "jenny say quor"
That is sure to appeal to a Duchess!

All. But don't be alarmed about { me, / he, } etc.
[*Dance, and dance off.*

Enter TERESA.

Ter. There's absolutely no limit to the vanity of some people. Ultrice actually believes that she has captivated Alfredo! Ha!

ha! ha! Well, I'll let her remain under that fond delusion a little longer—it amuses me. When I'm tired of it, I have only to hold up my little finger and he'll fling himself at my feet in a moment!

BALLAD.—TERESA.

When man in love-sick passion lingers,
A maid can twist him round her fingers:
A word from me
Of eloquent,
Yet maidenly
Encouragement—
A faint recall—
A dainty hint
That, after all,
I'm not a flint—
And such permissible pretences
Will put to flight his seven senses.
Then, as he cries, "My own, for ever!
No power on earth our lives shall sever!"
I'll answer him, with laugh provoking,
"Upon my word,
You're too absurd!
Why, bless my heart, I'm only joking!
Ha! ha! ha! ha!
I'm only joking!"

Enter ALFREDO *unperceived. He overhears the following verse.*

And should that fail—it doesn't often—
His heart by other means I'll soften:
With eyes that stream,
And tears that sob,
In joy supreme,
I'll make it throb—
I'll vow his scorn
My heart will break,
And all forlorn
For his sweet sake—
Which more than life itself I cherish—
I'll constant live and constant perish!
Then, as he cries, "My dearest treasure,
Adored beyond all earthly measure!"
I'll answer him (my triumph cloaking),
"Upon my word,
You're too absurd—
Get up, you goose, I'm only joking!
Ha! ha! ha! ha!
I'm only joking!"

Alf. (*coming forward—recitative*). Ah, cruel one!
Ter. Alfredo!
Alf. Madam, good morning! (*Going.*)

DUET.—TERESA AND ALFREDO.

Ter. Oh, whither, whither, whither, do you speed you?
Oh, hither, hither, hither, hither hie?
Alf. Another—nother—nother time I'll heed you,
I've other, other, other fish to fry.

ENSEMBLE.

ALFREDO (*aside*).	TERESA (*aside*).
To punish her I'll try,	There's a twinkle in his eye,
I'll soften by-and-by.	He'll soften by-and-by.
(*Aloud.*) My lady, I am sorry, but	(*Aloud.*) I'm very, very sorry that
I've other fish to fry!	you've other fish to fry.

Ter. A merry, merry, merry maid invites you,
Who's very, very, very short of sense.
Alf. It's flirti-flirti-flirtiness incites you,
Imperti-perti-perti-pertinence!

ENSEMBLE.

ALFREDO (*aside*).	TERESA (*aside*).
Of taking some offence,	He thinks me very dense,
I'm making a pretence,	I see through his pretence,
I'll punish her imperti-perti-perti-	(*Aloud.*) Oh, pardon my imperti-
pertinence!	perti-perti-pertinence!

Ter. Now, listen to me, dear,
'Twas waywardness wilful
(In which, as you see, dear,
I'm not very skilful)
That makes you so tearful;
Take heart, and be cheerful,
No mischief is done, dear—
I was only in fun, dear!
Alf. Now, listen to me, love—
My sentiments store them;
When maidens like thee, love,
On hearts that adore them
Unfeelingly trample,
They always give ample
Occasion for scorning—
I bid you good morning!
Ter. I was only in fun, dear!
Alf. I pray you take warning.
Ter. No mischief is done, dear!
Alf. I bid you good morning!

ENSEMBLE.

ALF. (*aside*).	TER. (*furiously.*)
She was only in fun—	I was only in fun,
No mischief is done;	But the mischief is done;
Of taking offence	Of taking offence
I am making pretence.	It is not a pretence.
(*Aloud.*) I bid you good morning!	For he bids me good morning!

[*Exit* ALFREDO

RECITATIVE.—TERESA.

Despised! Rejected! Do I wake or dream?
By him rejected? Oh, the shame of it!
Rather than this I'll overwhelm him with
The torrent of my passion—make him think
My brain is tottering for the love of him;
And when at last he yields to my protesting,
I'll say, "Ha! ha! poor fool—I was but jesting!" [*Exit.*

Flourish. Enter Chorus of Girls, *running.*

CHORUS.

Come, and take your places all,
The show is just beginning;
Don't you hear the trumpet's call,
And the drummer's dinning?
Frolic, fun, and flummery—
Magic, mirth, and mummery—
(That's the showman's summary)
Set us all a-grinning!

[*During this* ALFREDO *has returned, followed by* TERESA, *who expresses heart-broken passion in gesture.*

Enter ULTRICE *and* ELVINO, *who carries a theatrical cloak, sword, hat, and lady's train.*

Ult. (*recit.*). Allow me, madam, if you have quite done with him.
Alf. (*leaving* TERESA). Good morning, miss!
Ter. (*enraged—aside*). Oh, some day I'll be one with him!

[*Exit* TERESA.

El. (*to* ALF.). Allow me. 'Twill assist your Grace
If on your noble brow I place
This hat and feather. [ALFREDO *puts them on.*
(*To* ULT.). The Duchess, perhaps, will kindly deign
To wear these jewels and this train—
They go together. [ULTRICE *puts them on.*

[ALFREDO *and* ULTRICE *walk pompously to seats that are placed for them in front of the Inn door, the* Chorus *curtsying with mock humility.*

Chorus. Your Graces, as you wend,
We humbly bow and bend.
You look, we're quite aware,
A most imposing pair!
Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Enter procession of Tamorras, *disguised as Dominican monks:* ARROSTINO *as Prior.*

CHAUNT.

[*The Girls, believing the Monks to be genuine, all kneel.*

Mock Monks. Attamen er cunctis supra reliquisque notandum—

Arr. Omne quod exit in um (hoec berba, I don't understand 'em).

Mock Monks. } Esse genus neutrium—sic invariabile nomen—

Arr. Which is Greek to most of us here, and perhaps Double-Dutch to the showmen.

[*The* Tamorras *throw off their hoods and reveal themselves.*

Tamorras. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

CHORUS OF GIRLS

Oh, you wicked,
Base—deceiving—
It's distressing!
It's degrading;
We are trickèd
Through believing,
Never guessing
Masquerading!
Friars mocking!
Goodness gracious;
What a wrong, sir!
Why, how dare you?
It is shocking!
It's audacious!
Go along, sir!
I can't bear you!

Men. It is wicked—ha! ha! ha!
They are trickèd—ha! ha! ha!

All. This disguising
Is surprising,
Friars mocking,
It is shocking—
It is blameful—
It is shameful—
It is shameful—
Ha! ha! ha!

Enter MINESTRA, *disguised as a very old woman.*

Min. Come and listen, pretty ladies—
Cross my hand with maravedis—
For to prophesy my trade is,
And my prophecies are sound.

Fear no trick or double-dealing
I am clever at revealing,
Neither good nor ill concealing.
So, my pretties, gather round.

[*The Girls gather round her to have their fortunes told.* MINESTRA *throws off her hood and reveals herself.*

All. They / We } are trickèd—ha! ha! ha!
It is wicked—ha! ha! ha!
This disguising
Is surprising:
Ladies mocking!
Conduct shocking!
It is blameful—
It is shameful—
It is blameful—ha! ha! ha!

[*During the above* PIETRO *has brought on* BARTOLO *and* NITA *made up as wax-work figures of Hamlet and Ophelia.*

SOLO.—PIETRO.

Now, all you pretty villagers who haven't paid, stand *you* aside,
And listen to a tragic tale of love, despair, and suicide.
The gentleman's a noble prince—a marvel of ventriloquy—
Unhappily afflicted with a mania for soliloquy.
The lady is the victim of the God of Love tyrannical—
You see it in her gestures, which are morbidly mechanical;
He's backed himself at heavy odds, in proof of his ability
That he'll soliloquize her into utter imbecility.
She wildly begs him to desist—appeals to his humanity,
But all in vain—observe her eyes a-goggling with insanity.
He perseveres, improving the occasion opportunatic—
She sticks straws in her hair—he's won his wager—she's a lunatic!

[*During this,* BARTOLO *and* NITA *have gone through the movements described in a ridiculously jerky and mechanical fashion.*

ENSEMBLE.

CHORUS.—TERESA AND ULTRICE.

CHORUS.
Astonishing,
What science can contrive!
In everything
You'd think they were alive.
Her lovely face—
Her eloquent despair!
His princely grace,
His beautiful back hair.

TER. (*to* ALF.).
To thee I cling
To gain thy love I strive;
My heart you wring,
I shall not long survive!

ULT.
From his embrace
Thyself directly tear,
Or I'll deface
Thy beautiful back hair!

Alf. Appreciation of such skill
Should not be shown by stealth.
In bumpers round (I'll pay the bill),
We'll drink the showman's health.

[*Taking up wine-skin which* PIETRO *left at entrance to Inn.*

This wine-skin I devote to you,
We'll drink it till it's dry.
I'm sure that's what the Duke would do,
Were he as pleased as I!

All. Hurrah!
I'm sure that's what the Duke would do,
Were he as pleased as I!

Pie. (*horrified*). Beware!
That wine is mine,
You must not drink it.

Alf. Forbear!
I pay my way!
You may not think it!

[*Gives money to* PIETRO

Pie. Take care!
The wine is poisoned, on my word rely,
And he who drinks in agony will die!
Commencing with a gentle pain
Scarce worth a question,
It grows apace, till you complain
Of indigestion.
Then follows an internal fire
That scorns emulsions,
Until, ere nightful, you expire
In fierce convulsions!

All. Ha! ha!
An idle tale we think it!
Ho! ho!
We saw you freely drink it

[*During this* ALFREDO *has filled a number of goblets wit*
wine from the wine-skin, and handed them round t
ARROSTINO *and the* Male Chorus.

Alf. It can't be worse than 'Vino's wine accurst—
If we're to die of it, be thou the first!

[*Draws sword and offers cup to* PIETRO. *During th*
the two figures express galvanic agitation.

Pie. I can't obey you!
All. Drink!
Alf. Come, why delay you?
All. Drink!
Pie. I beg—I pray you!
All. Drink!
Alf. Quick, or I'll slay you!
All. Drink!

[*During this* ELVINO *has poured the wine down* PIETRO'
throat. PIETRO *immediately begins to feel the effe*
of the wine, which he described as poison, and whic
has become poison to him.

Alf. Oh, ye who are weary of life,
Don't trifle with pistol and knife—
This potion is far from amiss;
If you've ducats of gold in your purse,
Why, then, you may surely do worse
Than die of such poison as this!

Chorus. Oh, ye who are weary of life, etc.

[*During this,* TERESA *has pretended to fall insensible at* ALFREDO'S *feet. He supports her, and supposing that she has fainted, pours some of the wine down her throat. All the others* (*except the* Chorus of Girls) *raise the cups to their lips, and drink as the Act Drop falls.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Exterior of Monastery by moonlight. Mountain range and river in distance.*

RISOTTO *discovered.*

Ris. (*looking at watch*). Now, Minestra, where are you? This is the appointed spot, and you are not here. Dear, dear, dear! She never kept me waiting before. (*Looking off.*) Ah, I see her! Here she comes, toddling along like an old lady of eighty! What a thorough little artist it is! She keeps up the character even when she thinks no one is looking!

Enter MINESTRA, *now really transformed into an old crone.* My darling, you're late. Why—what a wonderful disguise! I never saw anything more perfect in my life! I can hardly believe that this is my pretty, dainty, delicate, little bride!

Min. Oh, Risotto, don't be angry with your little wifey, but something terrible has happened—I—I can't get it off!

Ris. Can't get what off, my pet?

Min. The make-up! I lined my face, just as you told me—and—and now they're real wrinkles!

Ris. (*examining her face*). What!

Min. Then you told me to cover my teeth with cobbler's wax. They've all come out! Then you told me to pretend I had gout and rheumatism—and I've got 'em! Ugh! (*Groaning.*)

Ris. But, my dearest girl——

Min. Then my hair! Oh, my poor hair!

Ris. It's a capital wig.

Min. That's it—it's not a wig! It's my own, and it won't come off—and I hate it!

Ris. This is a most remarkable circumstance. How did it happen?

Min. After I had dressed myself as an old woman we all drank some wine out of the conjuror's wine-skin, and I gradually became an old lady of seventy-four!

Ris. This is most embarrassing. I may say, most disappointing. On one's wedding-day, too!

Min. My poor husband, I'm so sorry for you! But I'm an old woman, and you won't be troubled with me long; that's one comfort for you.

Ris. Yes—I mean, no. I—I trust that, notwithstanding this—this modification of the implied terms of our agreement—there are many years of—of—yes, bliss—in store for us. (*Aside.*) If it had only happened yesterday, it wouldn't have mattered so much!

Min. Of course, you won't love your little woman now!

Ris. Oh, I beg your pardon. I shall have much pleasure in—in showing you every attention compatible with the—the respect due to a lady of your advanced years, my—my pet!

DUET.—RISOTTO AND MINESTRA.

Min. I'd be a young girl if I could!
Ris. You're very good—you're very good;
But that unlikely I'm afraid is!
Min. I'd be as lovely as a rose!
Ris. So I suppose—so I suppose.
And so, no doubt, would most old ladies!
Min. I'll rouge my face, make up my eyes,
With cunning dyes—with cunning dyes—
My venerable looks anointing.
I'll try my best your heart to thrill.
Ris. I'm sure you will, my love, but still
It *is* a little disappointing!
It *is* a little—
Min. Just a little—
Ris. Yes, a little—
Both. Little—little disappointing!
Ris. You're certain that you're wide awake?
There's no mistake—there's no mistake?
Your rugged wrinkles you can't thin off?
Min. I've scrubbed, and scrubbed, and scrubbed away
For half a day, for half a day,
Until I've almost scrubbed the skin off!
So gouty and rheumatic I,
That though I try, that though I try,
I scarce can fasten my shoe-buckles.
Ris. (*looking at her fingers*). My bride could write (so gouty she)
"No Popery! No Popery!"
On all the walls with all her knuckles!
It is a little—

Min. Just a little—
Ris. Yes, a little—
Both. Little—little disappointing!

[*Exit* RISOTTO, *slowly and despondingly.*

Min. It's a sad thing to be transformed into an old woman on the very flower of one's life! Ah, deary me! this is but a dismal wedding-day! Why, who comes here? Teresa, as I live—and crying too! What has *she* to cry for? She's young enough, *I'm* sure!

Enter TERESA. (*Her manner suggests that she is crazed.*)

RECITATIVE AND SONG.—TERESA.

All alone to my eerie I wander aweary,
A desolate maid of her lover bereft;
What matter? 'tis only a heart that is lonely—
A-many the maids that a lover has left!

BALLAD.

Whispering breeze,
Bring me my dear!
Wind-shaken trees,
Beckon him here!
Rivulet, hie—
Prithee go see—
Birds, as ye fly,
Call him to me!
Tell him the tale of the tears that I shed—
Tell him I die for the love that is dead!
Heart that in jest
Laughed him to scorn,
Now in my breast
Lying forlorn—
Idle to plead!
Cherish thy chain—
Thou shall be freed
Never again!
My heart it is sad and a-weary my head,
For I weep and I die for the love that is dead!

[*She sinks, weeping, on a seat.*

Min. Why, take heart, little one! What ails thee? Come, tell me thy sorrow. I'm an old body now, but time was when I was as young as thou art—and not so long since, either!

Ter. Oh, mother, mother, I think I am bewitched!

Min. (*aside*). Here's another!

Ter. I am as though in a dream! Shall I tell thee? Yes, for thou hast a kindly old face. To serve an unworthy end I must needs feign to be going mad for the love of Alfredo, and so feigning, I fell at his feet. He, thinking I had swooned in good sooth, placed a wine-cup to my lips, and I drank, and oh,

mother, it must have been some love-philtre, for, behold, a wondrous change came over me, and he who was naught to me before became as the very breath of my life!

Min. Well, the potion has done thee good service, for he's a good lad, and will make thee a strapping husband.

Ter. Nay, herein is the mischief of it—it was too late, for he had already given his heart to another, and would none of me, and I, whose very soul is possessed by my love of him, have retained the village fiddler to compose crazy love-songs for me to sing when occasion ariseth, for I am going mad—mad—mad—and be a girl never so crazy, her songs should be in accordance with the rules of thorough-bass.

Min. Ha! Now, mark me—that mountebanking fellow is at the bottom of this. Why, he hath also bewitched *me!*

Ter. Thou? *Thou* lovest not Alfredo?

Min. A fig for Alfredo; Why, look at me, child; I am Minestra!

Ter. (*looking at her*). Thou Minestra, who was married this morning? Nay, I am mad; but not so mad as that! Minestra is young and rather pretty—not so pretty as I, but still pretty—whereas thou art—oh! I ask pardon—my brain wanders—wanders—wanders!

Min. I am Minestra, I tell thee. For a purpose—also an unworthy one—I feigned to be an old dame, and so feigning, I drank—and, hang the knave, I am seventy!

Ter. Thou Minestra? Why, let me look! As I live, it is true! Oh, poor, poor Risotto!

Min. Even so; thy pity is for him—not for me. No matter. But if I can find this Jack-pudding, trust me, I'll make him set matters straight again. Oh, I have as much to regain as thou!

DUET.—MINESTRA AND TERESA.

Min. If I can catch this jolly Jack-Patch—
Ter. Ah, me! my heart is weary, oh!
Min. He'll go for a year with a flea in his ear!
Ter. And my days are dark and dreary, oh!
Min. He'll find his joke is a pig in a poke—
Ter. For love my soul is aching, oh!
Min. Though scarce a score, I'm seventy-four!—
Ter. And my heart, my heart is breaking, oh
Min. When a woman has come to seventy year
It's well to be withered and old and blear;
But when she is only a score like me,
It's better a fair young girl to be!
Ter. 'Tis well to be young when all is well,
And lovers are true to the tales they tell;

But ah! when love is a upas tree,
'Tis better an aged dame to be!

[*Exeunt together.*

Symphony. *Enter* BARTOLO *and* NITA (*still as waxwork Hamlet and Ophelia*). *They walk down the stage mechanically, as though controlled by clockwork. Their keys are fitted with keyholes in the small of their backs. Each wears a placard inscribed "Put a penny in the slot."*

DUET.—BARTOLO AND NITA.

Bar. If our action's stiff and crude,
Do not laugh because it's rude.
Ni. If our gestures promise larks,
Do not make unkind remarks.
Bar. Clockwork figures may be found
Everywhere and all around.
Ni. Ten to one, if we but knew,
You are clockwork figures too.
Bar. And the motto of the lot,
Ni. "Put a penny in the slot!"

Ni. Usurer, for money lent,
Making out his cent. per cent.—
Bar. Widow plump or maiden rare,
Deaf and dumb to suitor's prayer—
Ni. Tax collectors, whom in vain
You implore to "call again"—
Bar. Cautious voter, whom you find
Slow in making up his mind.
Ni. If you'd move them on the spot,
Bar. Put a penny in the slot!

Bar. Bland reporters in the courts,
Who suppress police reports—
Ni. Sheriff's yeoman, pen in fist,
Making out a jury list—
Bar. Stern policemen, tall and spare,
Acting all "upon the square"—
Ni. (Which in words that plainer fall
Means that you can square them all)—
Bar. If you want to move the lot,
Ni. Put a penny in the slot!

Bar. Nita.
Ni. Well?
Bar. This is a very uncomfortable state of things.
Ni. Very. How do you find your clockwork this evening?
Bar. Ticking, ticking, thank you. And you?
Ni. I fancy I want regulating.
Bar. Eh?
Ni. I think I'm rather fast.

Bar. Nita, you surprise and shock me.

Ni. Mechanically speaking, I mean.

Bar. Oh, I take you. This condition of existence is rather degrading. We are quite common clockwork, I believe?

Ni. Mere Geneva. The cheapest thing in the trade.

Bar. So I was given to understand.

Ni. It might have been worse. We might have been Waterbury, with interchangeable insides.

Bar. That's true. But when I remember the delicately-beautiful apparatus with which I was filled from head to foot—and which never, never ticked—when I contemplate the exquisite adjustment of means to end—which never, never wanted oiling—I am shocked to think that I am reduced to a mere mechanical complication of arbors, pallets, wheels, main-springs, and escapements!

Ni. Still you were always complaining. You never were quite well.

Bar. Because I eat too much.

Ni. That's true.

Bar. Never weary of putting into operation the exquisitely-beautiful apparatus of digestion, I over-taxed its powers. I was a scientific enthusiast, and I over-did it. Still, it is something to have an apparatus that never, never aches. I—I—hallo!

Ni. What's the matter?

Bar. (*very slowly*). I—beg your pardon. I—think—I—must be running down. May—I—trouble you? They've—thoughtlessly—put the key-hole—in—the—small of my back—and—I—can't get at it. (NITA *winds him up.*) Thank you. That's very nice, indeed. Now I can go on again. Hallo! c'ck! c'ck! c'ck!

Ni. What's wrong now?

Bar. I—c'ck – c'ck—I am not conversant with clockwork; but do you feel, from time to time, a kind of jerkiness that catches you just *here?*

Ni. No; I work as smooth as butter. The continued ticking is tiresome; but it's only for an hour.

Bar. The ticking is simply maddening. C'ck! c'ck! There it is again!

Ni. Something wrong with your works, I'm afraid. Stop a bit—I'll see. (*Opens door in chest, revealing a quantity of clockwork.*) No; all right there. Turn round. (*He does so, she opens door in the back of his head.*) No; the head appears to be empty. (*Opens door in his side.*) I see what it is; a halfpenny has got into your escapement. Stop a bit! (*Takes out halfpenny.*)

Bar. Bless my heart, how dangerous! What a relief! Thank you very much. You may keep it for your trouble; but do not—oh, do not spend it in foolishness.

Ni. While I'm about it, I'll just oil you, and then—— (*Proceeds to oil his works with a feather*).

Bar. (*squirming*). Don't! You tickle!

Enter PIETRO, *looking very ill.*

Pie. (*not seeing them*). The Duke and Duchess will be here in half an hour—their escort is already in sight. Dying by slow poison is a very painful process, and I couldn't have held out much longer. (*Sees them.*) Nita! what are you doing?

Ni. I'm oiling Bartolo.

Bar. I am being oiled by Nita, and she *does* tickle! I don't like it. At least I do like it, but it's wrong.

Pie. How dare you take such a liberty? Shut the gentleman up at once. Nice occupation for a young lady!

Ni. But there's something wrong with his works.

Pie. That's no affair of yours. If Bartolo's works are out of order, that is a matter for Bartolo's medical attendant—I mean his clockmaker. Don't let me catch you oiling him again.

Ni. Ha! ha! ha!

Pie. If this occurs again, I'll take both your keys away—upon my word I will!

TRIO.—BARTOLO, NITA, AND PIETRO.

Bar. When gentlemen are eaten up with jealousy,
They make themselves exceedingly ridiculous,
For everything around they tinted yellow see—
Their antics and extravagances tickle us,
Their antics and extravagances
Tic-tic, tic-tic, tic-tic, tic-tic—
They tic-tic, tic-tic, tickle us!

All. They tic-tic, etc.

Ni. Here's a gentleman, as fierce as a Mahometan,
So carried off by jealousy vehicular,
He's down on an unfortunate Automaton:
Some people are so terribly particular!
Some people are too terribly
Partic-tic, tic-tic, tic-tic, tic-tic—
Partic-tic, tic-tic, ticular!

All. Partic-tic, tic-tic, etc.

Pie. When a lady is disposed to be tyrannical,
She's equal to unlimited iniquity:
And flirting may be flirting, though mechanical—
A fact that has the sanction of antiquity—

Antic-tic, tic-tic, tic-tic, tic-tic—
Antic-tic, tic-tic, tiquity!

All. Antic-tic, etc.

[*Exeunt* NITA *and* BARTOLO *at opposite entrances, walking mechanically to symphony.* PIETRO *accompanying* NITA.

Enter from monastery a procession of Tamorras (*now transformed into Dominican Monks*) *chaunting from black-letter volumes;* ARROSTINO *as the Prior.*

CHAUNT.

Time there was when earthly joy
Gave our senses full employ;
In those days, for ever gone,
Bless us, how we carried on!
Clinking glasses—
Lovely lasses—
Revel hearty—
Pic-nic party—
Gay donzella—
Tarantella!
In those days, for ever gone,
Bless us, how we carried on!

(*Confidentially to audience*)

It's a most unaccountable thing—
An hour ago, as banditti,
We played like young lovers in spring,
The mischief in village and city;
But since we got merry and mellow
On the wine of that conjuring fellow,
Transmogrified we're
Into friars austere,
Unwashed and unpleasantly yellow!
Whatever you say or you sing,
It's a most unaccountable thing!

Enter Chorus of Girls, *from various directions.*

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

After a weary search
Hiding, at last, we find you;
Leaving us in the lurch
Isn't good breeding, mind you.
Offer apologee—
We shall want some persuading;
When do you think you'll be
Tired of masquerading?

[*During this chorus, the* Girls *have been endeavouring to induce the* Monks *to pay them attentions. The* Monks, *however, have kept their eyes studiously on their books.*

Arr. These blandishments I pray you curb,
Nor think us churls—nor think us churls;
Our pious calm do not disturb,
Now there's good girls—now there's good girls!
Though our emotions, as you see,
We try to freeze—we try to freeze!
We don't, as yet, pretend to be
St. Anthonies—St. Anthonies;
So go along—nor think us churls.
Now there's good girls—now there's good girls!

The Girls. Ah, cruel ones!
Time was, your love was stronger!
Ah, cruel ones!
You love us then no longer!

Monks. (*confidingly to* Girls). It's a most unaccountable thing—
An hour ago, as banditti,
We played like young lovers in spring,
The mischief in village and city.
But since we got merry and mellow
On the wine of that conjuring fellow,
Transmogrified we're
Into friars austere,
Unwashed and unpleasantly yellow!

All. Whatever you say or sing,
It's a most unaccountable thing!

Enter PIETRO, *still very ill.*

All (*seeing him*). Ah!
What does this mean—what have you done?
Do not attempt away to run
Nor questions try to parry.
The men to whom { we / they } were betrothed,
We / They } find as holy friars clothed,
Who mustn't ever marry!
Who mustn't ever marry!

Pie. Now I'll explain,
(If calm you'll be)
As well as I can
Though I'm in pain
And ought to see
A medical man.

RECITATIVE.—PIETRO.

My worthy friends, the wine you chose to drink
Makes every one what he pretends to be;

You personated monks, and monks you are,
And will be monks until the spell's removed.

All. Oh, horror!
Oh, horror and despair unprecedented!

Girls. But how long must they wait—to dreary cell,
To life-long celibacy sternly vowed?

Men. Yes, say—how long?

Pie. Have patience, for I hold the antidote,
[*Producing pocket-book.*
And in an hour or two, or thereabouts,
The spell shall be removed, and you may wed
As quickly and as often as you please!

All. Oh, rapture!
Oh, rapture, joy, and bliss unprecedented!

Chorus of Girls (dancing). An hour! 'twill rapidly pass,
Our freedom we then shall recover;
Each lover will welcome his lass—
Each lass will return to her lover!
The bells for our wedding will chime,
Delight in each bosom implanting,
So, gentlemen, in the mean time,
Proceed, if you please, with your chaunting!

ENSEMBLE.

MEN.	GIRLS.
Earthly pleasures that allure, For an hour we abjure, etc.	An hour! 'twill rapidly pass, Our freedom we then shall recover, etc.

[*Exeunt* Girls. *Manent* ARROSTINO, GIORGIO, LUIGI, *and* Monks.

Arr. This is a remarkable change, my son. A great improvement on our recent condition. Devoted as we now are to a life of contemplation—restricted by the rules of our order to a diet of bread and herbs—and not much of that—indigestion and its attendant inconveniences will be matters of tradition.

Lui. Still, it must be admitted that the old life was a pleasant one!

Arr. Yes, we had a jolly time of it while it lasted. (*Correcting himself.*) I should say that worldly allurements have the faculty of enlivening their devotees for the moment, but the evening's enjoyment seldom bears the morning's reflection, and the choicest banquet is but a feast of Dead Sea apples which turn to ashes in the mouth!

Gio. Under the circumstances, we might have spared ourselves the trouble of luring the Duke and Duchess to the monastery.

Arr. No—no, I think not. It is true that, having regard

to our present condition, we are bound to receive our distinguished guests with scrupulous hospitality, but an hour will soon pass, and we shall then, unhappily, lapse once more into the deplorable condition of being able to avail ourselves of any small change their Highnesses may happen to have about them. It is dreadful to think of, but that's what we shall be in about an hour. [LUIGI *ascends to balcony of monastery.*

RECITATIVE.

Lui. The Duke and Duchess hither wend their ways,
Shall we receive them with a song of praise?

Arr. With glad acclaim we'll make the welkin ring,
The only question is—what shall we sing?

CHORUS.

We know no song
That fits a throng
Of friars smug and greasy:
Our worldly lays
Of bygone days
Are much too free and easy;
Though suited to
A bandit crew,
They're not at all monastic.
And can't be sung
By sober tongue
Of mild ecclesiastic.

Arr. Stout-hearted be!
So many here
We need not fear
The ordeal before us;
No single word
Is ever heard
When singers sing in chorus.
So sing with me—

Enter ALFREDO, *dressed magnificently as the Duke, supporting* MINESTRA, *who is apparently insensible.*

All. La la la la la,
La la la, etc.

Duke (*very impressively*). La la la la la,
La la la, etc.

[*The* Monks *are much impressed with* ALFREDO'S *reply and express in gestures their satisfaction with the sentiments he has expressed.*

All. La la la la, etc.

[*Exeunt all the* Monks *except* ARROSTINO, GIORGIO, *and* LUIGI.

Alf. (*to* ARROSTINO). May I ask if you are the Prior of this monastery?

Arr. Well, I am and I am not. That is, I am now, but I wasn't an hour ago.

Alf. I see—a recent appointment.

Arr. Yes, for an hour. Present tense, I am a Prior. Imperfect tense, I was a rollicking young rantipole. Future tense, I shall be a rollicking young rantipole—in an hour. I hope I make myself clear?

Alf. Perfectly. (*Aside.*) Very like my own case. (*Aloud.*) I found this poor old lady almost insensible at the foot of the mountain. She had just strength enough to beg me to bring her here to you.

Arr. Exactly. You call her an old lady. Well, she *is* an old lady, and she isn't an old lady. Present tense, she *is* an old lady. Imperfect tense, she *was* a young lady.

Alf. Of course she was.

Arr. Ah! but, Future tense, she will be a young lady again—in an hour. That's the curious part of it. (*To* MINESTRA.) Go in, my dear—I should say my aged sister—and we will take every care of you. [LUIGI *carries* MINESTRA *into monastery.*

Alf. You are very good.

Arr. Well, I am, and I am not. Present tense, I *am* very good. Imperfect tense, I was confoundedly bad. Future tense, I shall be confoundedly bad again—in an hour.

Alf. We are fortunate in having dropped in upon you during your virtuous phase.

LUIGI *re-enters.*

Arr. Particularly so. It's altogether a curious state of things. I'm such a creature of habit that I find it difficult to remember that I am no longer a rantipole. For instance, I see you have a watch. Perhaps it is a valuable watch. Don't tell me it is; I would rather not know. Now, you can't imagine how difficult I find it not to take that watch. Oh, I know it's wrong; but then I always knew that. (*Adopting a clerical manner.*) By the way, I am collecting a few gold watches to send out to the poor naked savages of—— (*Aside.*) No, hang it all, let the man alone; you ought to be ashamed of yourself! (*Aloud.*) Pardon me, your handkerchief's hanging out. Will you oblige me by putting it out of sight? (ALFREDO *does so.*) Thank you, thank you so much! Temptation, you know, temptation! We are all weak, and it is sometimes difficult to resist.

Alf. (*aside*). Singular character, this Prior. (*Aloud.*) Of course I am prepared to give a donation to this monastery in consideration of your taking charge of the old lady. (*Feeling for his purse.*) By-the-by, where's my purse?

Arr., Gio., and Lui. (*falling on their knees*). Not guilty, your worship!

Alf. Of course not. Ha! ha! (*Finds it.*) Oh, here it is!

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Arr. Yes, but you frightened us!

Alf. Allow me to present this sum to the funds of the monastery.

Arr. No, thank ye; I'd rather not. Here, give it to Father Luigi. [*Exit* ARROSTINO *into monastery.*

Lui. No, thank ye; not for me. Father Giorgio will take it. [*Exit into monastery.*

Gio. Oh no; Father Giorgio won't. Father Giorgio's a good little boy now—for an hour. [*Exit into monastery.*

Alf. This is an unaccountable state of things! To please Elvino I pretended to be a Duke, and I selected Ultrice as my Duchess. We drank the wine and we became a Duke and Duchess in real earnest, and, what is odder still, that unpleasant young person exercises an extraordinary fascination over me; while Teresa, whom I used to love so passionately, has completely faded out of my recollection.

Enter TERESA, *crazed.*

SONG.—TERESA.

Willow, willow, where's my love?
Lovers ways are mazy;
All who hear me,
Much I fear me,
Think I'm going crazy.
Willow, willow, where's my love?
Waiting I, and weary—
Willow, willow, where's my love?
Where's my duck-a-deary?

Ter. 'Tis but a silly song, and passing dear at the ducat I paid for it. They think anything is good enough for a mad maiden to sing; but though the maid be mad, her ducats are sound, and good gold should buy good wares, and there are none so mad but that they want value for cash!

Alf. Teresa!

Ter. (*not recognizing him*). My lord Duke, is it not? My service to your Grace and to your Grace's bravery. (*Kissing his cloak.*) In good sooth, these are fine trappings, but they'll not trap *me*, for I love a lad who will none of me! My song says he's my duck-a-deary, which is true, in fact; but the expression is weak, and I am not yet mad enough for it. But I shall be, soon—I shall be, soon!

Alf. Teresa!—do you not know Alfredo, who used to love you so dearly?

Ter. Alfredo! Alfredo! It is—it is—ha! ha! ha! (*About to embrace him.*)

Alf. Don't. That I cannot permit. Under the circumstances, it would be in the last degree unbecoming.

Ter. Oh, I had forgotten! Thou lovest another now—a plain girl, compared with me. Methinks thou too must be mad to take up with such a one! But we are all mad—all—all mad.

Alf. I sometimes think so too. But take heart, little one; it is true I love thee not, for I have a bride, and no married man ever loves anybody but his wife.

Ter. I am not so mad but that I know *that*. Why, I learnt it at school! But thou art like the rest—thou thinkest that any truism is good enough for a mad girl!

Alf. As I was saying, take heart, for although you are nothing to me now, yet I have ascertained that this spell under which we all labour will be removed in an hour, and I shall then love you as dearly, as passionately as heretofore!

Ter. Is this indeed so? In one brief hour? No, no; I dare not believe it!

DUET.—ALFREDO AND TERESA.

Alf.

In days gone by,
But soon to come again,
With ardour pure
I used to pine,
And strove to lure
That heart of thine
With all my might and main.

I know not why,
But now, for thee, I find
I do not care:
To be exact,
Thy beauty rare
Does not attract—
To all thy charms I'm blind!
But take good heart—an hour will pass amain,
And all my love will then come back again!

Ter.

In days gone by
I played an idle part:
With scornful smile,
And heartless jest
And worldly guile,
Made manifest,
I grieved thy faithful heart.

How changed am I!
The love I dared decline,
Is now the breath
Of life to me.
And till kind death
Shall set me free
My love shall live for thine!
Be brave, poor heart—an hour will pass amain,
And all his love will then come back again!

Enter ULTRICE.

RECITATIVE.

Ult. So, I have found you!

Alf. (*leaving* TERESA, *and rushing to* ULTRICE, *as though under the influence of a spell*).

Passionately loved one!
Thy dainty hand I kiss—I mean the gloved one!
Oh, thou adored with passion most romantic!
Worshipped with all the fire of frenzy frantic!
For one short hour my love consent to share it—
It won't last longer than an hour—I swear it!

ENSEMBLE.

ULT. (*aside*).	ALF. (*aside*).	TER.
The days of scorn are past—	The scorn I felt is past—	An hour will soon have passed—
With passion he's demented!	With passion I'm demented!	With passion I'm demented!
Triumphant I, at last!	But still, it will not last—	It won't much longer last—
My heart is now contented.	With that I'll be contented.	With that I'll be contented.
A suppliant at my feet,	A suppliant at her feet,	Though he is at her feet,
Thanks to the wizard's potion—	Thanks to the wizard's potion—	Thanks to the wizard's potion—
With insolence I'll treat	An hour—and obsolete	An hour—and obsolete
His newly-born devotion.	My newly-born devotion!	His newly-born devotion!

[*Exit* ALFREDO *into monastery. follow him; she is stopped by her off in the opposite direction.* TERESA *attempts to* ULTRICE, *who sends* ULTRICE *remains.*

RECITATIVE.—ULTRICE.

An hour? Nay, nay—
A lifetime rather—that is as I will.
His love is mine—yes, mine alone, until
His dying day!

Go, cheat yourselves with promises, poor fools!
I hold the talisman that overrules
The potion's power! (*Producing the pocket-book.*)
I found the conjuror sleeping and alone—
I stole it! It's mine! my very own!
Alfredo, till he dies, shall wear my gyves!
An hour? Poor fools, that hour shall last your lives!
Ha! ha! an hour! [*Exit.*

Enter all the Chorus of Girls, *running.* ALFREDO *comes out of monastery and joins* ULTRICE. *He is followed by all the* Monks. *Enter, also,* PIETRO, BARTOLO, *and* NITA, *the two last still as clockwork figures.*

Chorus of Girls.
Oh, please you not to go away
Until you've seen the clockwork play.
Two figures carry on the plot,
And one's a man—the other's not.
They're full of complicated springs,
And weights, and wheels, and catgut strings—
You wind 'em up, just in the back,
With cracky, cracky, cracky, crack—
Then all the wheels, revolving quick,
Go ticky, ticky, ticky, tick—
And then the figures eat and drink,
And walk and talk, and wink and think,
And quarrel, just like lovers twain,
And kiss and make it up again.

All.
It's very true, and very quaint—
The one's a man, the other ain't.
You wind 'em up, just in the back,
With cracky, cracky, cracky, crack—
And all the wheels, revolving quick,
Go ticky, ticky, ticky, tick.
It's very true—it's very quaint—
The one's a man—the other ain't!

[*During this,* PIETRO *has been dusting and arranging the figures, who have entered, jerkily, into the spirit of the chorus.*

Pie. (*coming forward*). May it please your Graces—
These are figures two,
Who, in port and paces,
Show you something new.
Note their human faces,
And the things they do;
We've reserved front places—
(*Recognizing them.*) Hallo! Why, it's you!
(*To the others.*) Alfredo and Ultrice! Peasants two!

All. Oh!
What do you mean by this sheer audacity?
What do you mean by this ill-timed joke?
How do you dare defy veracity?

Ult. Spare your unrestrained loquacity,
Listen while we the truth uncloke
At 'Vino's base design—
The Duke and Duchess aping—
We drank the cursed wine,
For which we all were gaping.
Then all at once we fell
Into the wizard's clutches,
Who changed us, strange to tell,
To genuine Duke and Duchess.

All. But——

Ult. Don't ask for further details—cease your chatter;
We've told you all we know about the matter.
[*Exeunt* ALFREDO *and* ULTRICE.

Chorus. We may as well restrain our useless chatter;
They've told us all they know about the matter!

Pie. (*despondingly*). There's only one thing to be done,
Destroy the antidote by fierce ignition,
And thereby bring back every one
To his (or her) original condition!

All. Hurrah!

The Men. Sandal and robe we gladly lose,
Here is an end to our calling clerical.

The Girls. Now they may marry whenever they choose,
All of us are with joy hysterical.

Bar. and Nita. We shall be human, body and limb,
Happy to think our state is curable.

Pie. I shall be free from these tortures grim;
They're getting exceedingly unendurable!

All. Hurrah! [PIETRO *feels for pocket-book.*
Quick, quick—the antidote! [*He can't find it.*
How horrified you look!

Pie. I had it in this coat—
Safe in my pocket-book. [*Feeling for it.*
The truth I must admit,
Some thief has stolen it!

All. Oh, horror!
Accursed sorcerer! [*Threateningly to* PIETRO.
Thou demon-leagued traitor!
Ill-omened harbinger!
Low-born equivocator!
This is a hideous plot
To rob us of our senses—
Restore us on the spot,
Or dread the consequences!

[*Exeunt all but* PIETRO, BARTOLO, *and* NITA. PIETRO *sits in great pain and distress.* BARTOLO *and* NITA *make ineffective attempts to move and speak, but they have "run down."*

Pie. (*observing their efforts*). Now, then, what's wrong with you? Oh, I see. (*Winds them up.*)

Spoken together very rapidly.

Bar. Upon my honour, this is a pretty state of things. Clockwork for life, I suppose! It's monstrous—outrageous! What's to become of Nita, and, above all, what's to become of me?

Ni. Well, a nice mess you've made of this; to go and lose the only thing that could bring us back to life again. What do you mean by it, you ridiculous old donkey?

Pie. What do you want?

Ni. Why, if I'm to be Ophelia for the rest of my life, it would be convenient to know what Ophelia did.

Bar. She coaxed Hamlet, a good deal.

Pie. Nothing of the kind; she committed suicide because Hamlet wouldn't marry her.

Ni. What—lately?

Pie. Lately! Several hundred years ago. (NITA *and* BARTOLO *turn and walk rapidly up stage.*) Where are you going?

Ni. We're going back several hundred years.

Pie. It's not necessary. You can do it here. (NITA *begins to cry.*)

Bar. I have it. If Hamlet had married Ophelia she wouldn't have committed suicide.

Pie. Well? What then?

Bar. What then? Why; if I marry her at once the motive for the act will be removed!

Pie. Nonsense! Hamlet and Ophelia never married. It would be trifling with the text.

Bar. Anyhow, it's a new reading. What! am I to be the only Hamlet who is not permitted to discover new readings? Bah!

TRIO.—PIETRO, NITA, AND BARTOLO.

Pie.
Ophelia was a daintly little maid,
Who loved a very melancholy Dane;
Whose affection of the heart, so it is said,
Preceded his affection of the brain.
Heir-apparent to the Crown,
He thought lightly of her passion
Having wandered up and down,
In an incoherent fashion,
When she found he wouldn't wed her
In a river, in a meadder,
Took a header, and a deader
Was Ophelia.

Nita. Ophelia to her sex was a disgrace,
Whom nobody could feel compassion for.
Ophelia should have gone to Ely Place
To consult an eminent solicitor.
When such promises as these
Breaks a suitor, rich and regal,
Why, substantial damages
Is the panacea legal—
From a jury—sons of Adam,
Though as stony as Macadam,
Maid or madam, she'd have had 'em,
Would Ophelia!

Bar. There's a venerable proverb in my mind,
Which applies to this catastrophe, I think,
To a horse who is unfortunately blind
Any nod is just as good as any wink.
Opportunity I'll seize
Of avoiding any error:
Of substantial damages
I have always had a terror.
That calamity to parry
Not a moment will I tarry,
Off I'll carry and I'll marry
Poor Ophelia!

[*Exeunt* BARTOLO *and* NITA. *As they go off,* PIETRO *slyly steals their respective keys, and goes off triumphantly in the opposite direction.*

Enter ULTRICE *and* TERESA.

Ult. She comes! Ah, Madame Jilt!
Oh, crazy insolent! Ah, wonder as thou wilt,
Thy scornful head is bent!

Ter. Ultrice! Ultrice!

Ult. Ah, cruel one!
Thou knowest now
The torture of a love that's gone astray!

Ter. Ah! spare me!

Ult. Thou knowest now
The fate of those who will not when they may

Ter. Ah! spare me!

Ult. Thou knowest now
The sting of jealousy's envenomed dart.

Ter. Ah! spare me!

Ult. Thou knowest now
The deadly famine of a hungry heart.

Ter. Ah! spare me!
Farewell, Alfredo! [*Turning to* ULTRICE.
Ere deathly cold
I lie on yonder strand

Ah, let me hold
The hand that is his hand; [*Taking her hand.*
Ere lost I be
In yonder cold eclipse,
Vouchsafe to me
The lips that are his lips!
[*Kissing* ULTRICE, *who remains motionless.*
May he forget
His love of old—
Her sun has set
Her tale is told!

[*Goes up stage and mounts parapet overhanging the river. She is about to throw herself off, when* ULTRICE, *who has been struggling with her better feelings, relents.*

Ult. Hold! Stay thy hand! Teresa, come to me;
My soul is softened and my heart is stirred!
Come to me quickly—I have wronged thee.
Pardon, Teresa, I have greatly erred!

Ter. Ultrice! [*She rushes to her arms.*

Ult. Take heart, take heart, for thou shalt righted be;
Live—for thy love shall be restored to thee!
Come hither, all!

Enter all the characters from different entrances—PIETRO *in great agony.*

Chorus. Now, what is this, and what is that?
We wish to go to yonder valley.
What do you want? what are you at?
Explain your conduct generally!

Ult. Proud of my new-born rank
Which raised me from my clan,
From yonder mountebank
I stole the talisman!
[*She produces it.* PIETRO *clutches at it.*

All. Ah, false one!
From yonder mountebank
She stole the talisman! [*Exit* ULTRICE.

Pie. Another minute and my fate were sealed!
A light—quick—quick!—my fortune for a light!
[*A light is given to him—he burns the parchment.*
The parchment burns—my tortures slowly yield—
'Tis gone! and with it our distorted plight!

[*Gong—all change to their original characters: the* Monks *becoming brigands,* MINESTRA *becoming a young woman,* ALFREDO *and* ULTRICE *becoming peasants,* BARTOLO *and* NITA *are restored to humanity, and* PIETRO *recovers his health.* ALFREDO *embraces* TERESA.

CHORUS.

Hurrah!
The spell's removed,
Hurrah!
The { men we / girls they } loved,
Hurrah!

Are { ours / theirs } again,
Hurrah!
With might and main,
Hurrah!

Arc. The Duke and the Duchess, when they travel thro ugh the land,
How the pair they will stare, with their high jerry ho!
They will yet fall a prey to the valour of our band,
For we shall not be happy till we get them;
With our high jerry ho!
And our canticle pedantical,
And our mystic, though artistic,
Jerry high, jerry ho!

All. With their high jerry ho! etc.

Pie., Bar., Ni. The Duke and the Duchess, had they travelled through our land,
With their cries of surprise and their high jerry ho!
They'd have seen many things that they wouldn't understand;
Not the least is our show, you may bet them—
With our high jerry ho!
And our clickings and our tickings—
Our emphatic automatic
Jerry high, jerry ho!

All. With their high jerry ho! etc.

Alf. and Ter. The Duke and the Duchess, if they travel through our land,
As they may, any day, with their high jerry ho!
They will find that we're linked, heart in heart hand in hand,
And a loving example we'll set them,
With our high jerry ho!
And our notion of devotion,
And our gentle sentimental
Jerry high, jerry ho!

All. With their high jerry ho!

CURTAIN.

UTOPIA, LIMITED;

OR,

THE FLOWERS OF PROGRESS.

AN ORIGINAL COMIC OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

First performed at the Savoy Theatre, London, under the management of MR. D'OYLY CARTE, *on Saturday, October 7th,* 1893.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING PARAMOUNT THE FIRST, *King of Utopia*	MR. RUTLAND BARRINGTON
SCAPHIO, PHANTIS } *Judges of the Utopian Supreme Court*	MR. W. H. DENNY. / MR. JOHN LE HAY.
TARARA, *the Public Exploder*	MR. WALTER PASSMORE.
CALYNX, *the Utopian Vice-Chamberlain*	MR. BOWDEN HASWELL.

IMPORTED FLOWERS OF PROGRESS.

LORD DRAMALEIGH, *a British Lord Chamberlain*	MR. SCOTT RUSSELL.
CAPTAIN FITZBATTLEAXE, *First Life Guards*	MR. CHARLES KENNINGHAM.
CAPTAIN SIR EDWARD CORCORAN, K.C.B., *of the Royal Navy*	MR. LAWRENCE GRIDLEY.
MR. GOLDBURY, *a Company Promoter — afterwards Comptroller of the Utopian Household*	MR. SCOTT FISHE.
SIR BAILEY BARRE, Q.C., M.P. ...	MR. ENES BLACKMORE.
MR. BLUSHINGTON, *of the County Council*	MR. HERBERT RALLAND.
THE PRINCESS ZARA, *Eldest Daughter of King Paramount*	MISS NANCY MCINTOSH.
THE PRINCESS NEKAYA, THE PRINCESS KALYBA *her Younger Sisters.*	MISS EMMIE OWEN. / MISS FLORENCE PERRY.
THE LADY SOPHY, *their English Gouvernante*	MISS ROSINA BRANDRAM.
SALATA, MELENE, PHYLLA *Utopian Maidens*	MISS EDITH JOHNSTON. / MISS MAY BELL. / MISS FLORENCE EASTON.

ACT I.

A UTOPIAN PALM GROVE.

ACT II.

THRONE ROOM IN KING PARAMOUNT'S PALACE.

UTOPIA, LIMITED;

OR,

THE FLOWERS OF PROGRESS.

SCENE.—*A Utopian Palm Grove in the gardens of* KING PARAMOUNT'S *Palace, showing a picturesque and luxuriant Tropical landscape, with the sea in the distance.* SALATA, MELENE, PHYLLA, *and other* Maidens *discovered, lying lazily about the stage and thoroughly enjoying themselves in lotus-eating fashion.*

OPENING CHORUS.

In lazy languor—motionless,
We lie and dream of nothingness;
For visions come
From Poppydom
Direct at our command:
Or, delicate alternative,
In open idleness we live,
With lyre and lute
And silver flute,
The life of Lazyland!

SOLO.—PHYLLA.

The song of birds
In ivied towers;
The rippling play
Of waterway;
The lowing herds;
The breath of flowers;
The languid loves
Of turtle doves—
These simple joys are all at hand
Upon thy shores, O Lazyland!

CHORUS.

In lazy languor, etc.

Enter CALYNX.

Cal. Good news! Great news! His Majesty's eldest daughter, Princess Zara, who left our shores five years since to go to England—the greatest, the most powerful, the wisest country in the world—has taken a high degree at Girton, and is on her way home again, having achieved a complete mastery over all the elements that have tended to raise that glorious country to her present pre-eminent position among civilized nations!

Sal. Then in a few months Utopia may hope to be completely Anglicized?

Cal. Absolutely and without a doubt.

Mel. (*lazily*). We are very well as we are. Life without a care—every want supplied by a kind and fatherly monarch, who, despot though he be, has no other thought than to make his people happy—what have we to gain by the great change that is in store for us?

Sal. What have we to gain? English institutions, English tastes, and oh, English fashions!

Cal. England has made herself what she is because, in that favoured land, every one has to think for himself. Here we have no need to think, because our monarch anticipates all our wants, and our political opinions are formed for us by the journals to which we subscribe. Oh, think how much more brilliant this dialogue would have been, if we had been accustomed to exercise our reflective powers! They say that in England the conversation of the very meanest is a coruscation of impromptu epigram!

Enter TARARA *in a great rage.*

Tar. Lalabalele talala! Callabale lalabalica falahle!

Cal. (*horrified*). Stop—stop, I beg!

[*All the ladies close their ears.*

Tar. Callamalala galalate! Caritalla lalabalee kallalale poo!

Ladies. Oh, stop him! stop him!

Cal. My Lord, I'm surprised at you. Are you not aware that His Majesty, in his despotic acquiescence with the emphatic wish of his people, has ordered that the Utopian language shall be banished from his court, and that all communications shall henceforward be made in the English tongue.

Tar. Yes, I'm perfectly aware of it, although—— (*Suddenly presenting an explosive "cracker".*) Stop—allow me.

Cal. (*pulls it*). Now, what's that for?

Tar. Why, I've recently been appointed Public Exploder to His Majesty, and as I'm constitutionally nervous, I must accustom myself by degrees to the startling nature of my duties. Thank you. I was about to say that although, as Public Exploder, I am next in succession to the throne, I nevertheless do my best to fall in with the royal decree. But when I am over-mastered by an indignant sense of overwhelming wrong, as I am now, I slip into my native tongue without knowing it. I am told that in the language of that great and pure nation, strong expressions do not exist, consequently when I want to let off steam I have no alternative but to say, "Lalabalele molola lililah kallalale poo!"

Cal. But what is your grievance?

Tar. This—by our Constitution we are governed by a Despot who, although in theory, absolute—is, in practice, nothing of the kind—being watched day and night by two Wise Men whose duty it is, on his very first lapse from political or social propriety, to denounce him to me, the Public Exploder, and it then becomes my duty to blow up His Majesty with dynamite—allow me. (*Presenting a cracker, which* CALYNX *pulls.*) Thank you—and, as some compensation to my wounded feelings, I reign in his stead.

Cal. Yes. After many unhappy experiments in the direction of an ideal Republic, it was found that what may be described as a Despotism tempered by Dynamite provides, on the whole, the most satisfactory description of ruler—an autocrat who dares not abuse his autocratic power.

Tar. That's the theory—but in practice, how does it act? Now, do you ever happen to see the *Palace Peeper*?

[*Producing a "Society" Paper.*

Cal. Never even heard of the journal.

Tar. I'm not surprised, because His Majesty's agents always buy up the whole edition; but I have an aunt in the publishing department, and she has supplied me with a copy. Well, it actually teems with circumstantially convincing details of the King's abominable immoralities! If this high-class journal may be believed, His Majesty is one of the most Heliogabalian profligates that ever disgraced an autocratic throne! And *do* these Wise Men denounce him to me? Not a bit of it! They wink at his immoralities! Under the circumstances I really think I am justified in exclaiming, "Lalabalele molola lililah kalabalele poo!" (*All horrified.*) I don't care—the occasion demands it. [*Exit* TARARA

MARCH. *Enter* Guard, *escorting* SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS.

CHORUS.

Oh, make way for the Wise Men!
They are prizemen—
Double-first in the world's university!
For though lovely this island,
(Which is *my* land,)
She has no one to match them in *her* city.
They're the pride of Utopia—
Cornucopia
Is each in his mental fertility.
Oh, they never make blunder,
And no wonder,
For they're triumphs of infallibility.

DUET.—SCAPHIO AND PHANTIS.

In every mental lore,
(The statement smacks of vanity),
We claim to rank before
The wisest of humanity.
As gifts of head and heart
We wasted on "utility,"
We're "cast" to play a part
Of great responsibility.

Our duty is to spy
Upon our King's illicities,
And keep a watchful eye
On all his eccentricities.
If ever a trick he tries
That savours of rascality,
At our decree he dies
Without the least formality.

We fear no rude rebuff,
Or newspaper publicity;
Our word is quite enough,
The rest is electricity.
A pound of dynamite
Explodes in his auriculars;
It's not a pleasant sight—
We'll spare you the particulars.

It's force all men confess,
The King needs no admonishing—
We may say its success
Is something quite astonishing.
Our despot it imbues
With virtues quite delectable;
He minds his P's and Q's,—
And keeps himself respectable.

Of a tyrant polite
He's a paragon quite.
He's as modest and mild
In his ways as a child;

And no one ever met
With an autocrat, yet,
So delightfully bland
To the least in the land!

So make way for the wise men, etc.

[*Exeunt all but* SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS. PHANTIS *is pensive.*

Sca. Phantis, you are not in your customary exuberant spirits. What is wrong?

Phan. Scaphio, I think you once told me that you have never loved?

Sca. Never! I have often marvelled at the fairy influence which weaves its rosy web about the faculties of the greatest and wisest of our race; but I thank Heaven I have never been subjected to its singular fascination. For, oh, Phantis! there is that within me that tells me that when my time *does* come, the convulsion will be tremendous! When *I* love, it will be with the accumulated fervour of sixty-six years! But I have an ideal—a semi-transparent Being—filled with an inorganic pink jelly—and I have never yet seen the woman who approaches within measurable distance of it. All are opaque—opaque—opaque!

Phan. Keep that ideal firmly before you, and love not until you find her. Though but fifty-five, I am an old campaigner in the battle-fields of Love; and, believe me, it is better to be as you are, heart-free and happy, than as I am—eternally racked with doubting agonies! Scaphio, the Princess Zara returns from England to-day!

Sca. My poor boy, I see it all!

Phan. Oh! Scaphio, she is so beautiful. Ah! you smile, for you have never seen her. She sailed for England three months before you took office.

Sca. Now, tell me, is your affection requited?

Phan. I do not know—I am not sure. Sometimes I think it is, and then come these torturing doubts! I feel sure that she does not regard me with absolute indifference, for she could never look at me without having to go to bed with a sick headache.

Sca. That is surely something. Come, take heart, boy! you are young and beautiful. What more could maiden want?

Phan. Ah! Scaphio, remember she returns from a land where every youth is as a young Greek god, and where such poor beauty as I can boast is seen at every turn.

Sca. Be of good cheer! Marry her, boy, if so your fancy wills, and be sure that love will come.

Phan. (*overjoyed*). Then you will assist me in this?

Sca. Why, surely! Silly one, what have you to fear? We have but to say the word, and her father must consent. Is he not our very slave? Come, take heart. I cannot bear to see you sad.

Phan. Now I may hope, indeed! Scaphio, you have placed me on the very pinnacle of human joy!

DUET.—SCAPHIO AND PHANTIS.

Sca. Let all your doubts take wing—
Our influence is great.
If Paramount our King
Presume to hesitate,
Put on the screw,
And caution him
That he will rue
Disaster grim
That must ensue
To life and limb,
Should he pooh-pooh
This harmless whim.

Both. This harmless whim—this harmless whim.
It is, as { I / you } say, a harmless whim.

Phan. (*dancing*). Observe this dance
Which I employ
When I, by chance,
Go mad with joy.
What sentiment
Does this express?

[PHANTIS *continues his dance while* SCAPHIO *vainly endeavours to discover its meaning.*

Supreme content
And happiness

Both. And happiness—and happiness—
Of course it does—and happiness

Phan. Your friendly aid conferred,
I need no longer pine.
I've but to speak the word.
And lo! the maid is mine!
I do not choose
To be denied.
Or wish to lose
A lovely bride—
If to refuse
The King decide,
The Royal shoes
Then woe betide!

Both. Then woe betide—then woe betide
The Royal shoes then woe betide

Soa. (*dancing*). This step to use
I condescend
Whene'er I chose
To serve a friend.
What it implies
Now try to guess;

[SOAPHIO *continues his dance while* PHANTIS *is vainly endeavouring to discover its meaning.*

It typifies
Unselfishness!

Both (*dancing*). Unselfishness! Unselfishness!
Of course it does—unselfishness!
This step to use
We condescend! etc.

[*Exeunt* SOAPHIO *and* PHANTIS.

MARCH. *Enter* KING PARAMOUNT, *attended by* Guards *and* Nobles, *and preceded by* Girls *dancing before him.*

CHORUS.

Quaff the nectar—cull the roses—
Gather fruit and flowers in plenty!
For our King no longer poses—
Sing the songs of *far niente!*
Wake the lute that sets us lilting,
Dance a welcome to each comer:
Day by day our year is wilting—
Sing the sunny songs of summer
La, la, la, la!

SONG.—KING.

A King of autocratic power we—
A despot whose tyrannic will is law—
Whose rule is paramount o'er land and sea,
A Presence of unutterable awe!
But though the awe that I inspire
Must shrivel with imperial fire
All foes whom it may chance to touch,
To judge by what I see and hear,
It does not seem to interfere
With popular enjoyment, much.

Chorus. No, no—it does not interfere
With our enjoyment much.

RECITATIVE.—KING.

My subjects all, it is your wish emphatic
That all Utopia shall henceforth be modelled
Upon that glorious country called Great Britain—
To which some add—but others do not—Ireland.

All. It is!

King. That being so, as you insist upon it,
We have arranged that our two younger daughters
Who have been "finished" by an English Lady—

(*Tenderly.*) A grave, and good, and gracious English Lady—
Shall daily be exhibited in public,
That all may learn what, from the English stand-point,
Is looked upon as maidenly perfection!
Come hither, daughters!

Enter NEKAYA *and* KALYBA. *They are twins, about fifteen years old; they are very modest and demure in their appearance, dress, and manner. They stand with their hands folded and their eyes cast down.*

CHORUS.

How fair! how modest! how discreet
How bashfully demure!
See how they blush, as they've been taught,
At this publicity unsought!
How English and how pure!

DUET.—NEKAYA AND KALYBA.

Both. Although of native maids the cream,
We're brought up on the English scheme—
The best of all
For great and small
Who modesty adore.
Nek. For English girls are good as gold,
Extremely modest (so we're told),
Demurely coy—divinely cold—
Kal. And we are that—and more.
To please papa, who argues thus—
All girls should mould themselves on us
Because we are,
By furlongs far
The best of all the bunch,
We show ourselves to loud applause
From ten to four without a pause—
Nek. Which is an awkward time because
It cuts into our lunch.
Both. Oh, maids of high and low degree,
Whose social code is rather free,
Please look at us and you will see
What good young ladies ought to be!
Nek. And as we stand, like clockwork toys,
A lecturer whom papa employs
Proceeds to praise
Our modest ways
And guileless character—
Kal. Our well-known blush—our downcast eyes—
Our famous look of mild surprise
Nek. (Which competition still defies)—
Kal. Our celebrated "Sir!!!"
Then all the crowd take down our looks
In pocket memorandum books.

To diagnose
Our modest pose
The Kodaks do their best:

Nek. If evidence you would possess
Of what is maiden bashfulness,
You only need a button press—

Kal. And *we* do all the rest

Enter LADY SOPHY—*an English lady of mature years and extreme gravity of demeanour and dress. She carries a lecturer's wand in her hand. She is led on by the* KING, *who expresses great regard and admiration for her.*

RECITATIVE.—LADY SOPHY.

This morning we propose to illustrate
A course of maiden courtship, from the start
To the triumphant matrimonial finish.

[*Through the following song the two* Princesses *illustrate in gesture the description given by* LADY SOPHY.

SONG.—LADY SOPHY.

Bold-faced ranger
(Perfect stranger)
Meets two well-behaved young ladies.
He's attractive,
Young and active—
Each a little bit afraid is.
Youth advances,
At his glances
To their danger they awaken;
They repel him
As they tell him
He is very much mistaken.
Though they speak to him politely,
Please observe they're sneering slightly,
Just to show he's acting vainly.
This is Virtue saying plainly,
"Go away, young bachelor,
We are not what you take us for!"
When addressed impertinently,
English ladies answer gently,
"Go away, young bachelor,
We are not what you take us for!"

As he gazes,
Hat he raises,
Enters into conversation.
Makes excuses—
This produces
Interesting agitation.
He, with daring,
Undespairing,
Gives his card—his rank discloses—

Little heeding
This proceeding,
They turn up their little noses.
Pray observe this lesson vital—
When a man of rank and title
His position first discloses,

Always cock your little noses.
When at home, let all the class
Try this in the looking-glass.
English girls of well-bred notions,
Shun all unrehearsed emotions,
English girls of highest class
Practise them before the glass.

His intentions
Then he mentions
Something definite to go on—
Makes recitals
Of his titles,
Hints at sentiments, and so on.
Smiling sweetly,
They, discreetly,
Ask for further evidences:
Thus invited,
He, delighted,
Gives the usual references.
This is business. Each is fluttered
When the offer's fairly uttered.
"Which of them has his affection?"
He declines to make selection.
Do they quarrel for his dross?
Not a bit of it—they toss!
Please observe this cogent moral—
English ladies never quarrel.
When a doubt they come across,
English ladies always toss.

RECITATIVE.—LADY SOPHY.

The lecture's ended. In ten minutes' space
'Twill be repeated in the market-place!

[*Exit* LADY SOPHY, *followed by* NEKAYA *and* KALYBA

CHORUS.

Quaff the nectar—cull the roses—
Bashful girls will soon be plenty!
Maid who thus at fifteen poses
Ought to be divine at twenty!

[*Exit* Chorus. *Manet* KING

King. I requested Scaphio and Phantis to be so good as t
favour me with an audience this morning.

Enter SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS.

Oh, here they are!

Sca. Your Majesty wished to speak with us, I believe. You —you needn't keep your crown on, on our account, you know.

King. I beg your pardon. (*Removes it.*) I always forget that! Odd, the notion of a King not being allowed to wear one of his own crowns in the presence of two of his own subjects.

Phan. Yes—bizarre, is it not?

King. Most quaint. But then it's a quaint world.

Phan. Teems with quiet fun. I often think what a lucky thing it is that you are blessed with such a keen sense of humour!

King. Do you know, I find it invaluable. Do what I will, I *cannot* help looking at the humorous side of things—for, properly considered, everything has its humorous side—even the *Palace Peeper*. (*Producing it.*) See here—"Another Royal Scandal," by Junius Junior. "How long is this to last?" by Senex Senior. "Ribald Royalty," by Mercury Major. "Where is the Public Exploder?" by Mephistopheles Minor. When I reflect that all these outrageous attacks on my morality are written by me, at your command—well, it's one of the funniest things that have come within the scope of my experience.

Sca. Besides, apart from that, they have a quiet humour of their own which is simply irresistible.

King. (*gratified*). Not bad, I think. Biting, trenchant sarcasm—the rapier, not the bludgeon—that's my line. But then it's so easy—I'm such a good subject—a bad King but a good Subject—ha! ha!—a capital heading for next week's leading article! (*Makes a note.*) And then the stinging little paragraphs about our Royal goings-on with our Royal Second Housemaid—delicately sub-acid, are they not?

Sca. My dear King, in that kind of thing no one can hold a candle to you.

Phan. But the crowning joke is the Comic Opera you've written for us—"King Tuppence; or, A Good Deal Less than Half a Sovereign"—in which the celebrated English tenor, Mr. Wilkinson, burlesques your personal appearance and gives grotesque imitations of your Royal pecularities. It's immense!

King. Ye—es. That's what I wanted to speak to you about. Now, I've not the least doubt but that even *that* has its humorous side, too—if one could only see it. As a rule, I'm pretty quick at detecting latent humour—but I confess I do *not* quite see where it comes in, in this particular instance. It's so horribly personal!

Sca. Personal? Yes, of course it's personal—but consider th antithetical humour of the situation.

King. Yes. I—I don't think I've quite grasped that.

Sca. No? You surprise me. Why, consider. During the da thousands tremble at your frown, during the night (from 8 11) thousands roar at it. During the day your most arbitra pronouncements are received by your subjects with abject su mission—during the night, they shout with joy at your mo terrible decrees. It's not every monarch that enjoys the priv lege of undoing by night all the despotic absurdities he's co mitted during the day.

King. Of course! Now I see it! Thank you very much. was sure it had its humorous side, and it was very dull of n not to have seen it before. But, as I said just now, it's a quai world.

Phan. Teems with quiet fun.

King. Yes. Properly considered, what a farce life is, to be sure

SONG.—KING.

First you're born—and I'll be bound you
Find a dozen strangers round you.
"Hallo," cries the new-born baby,
"Where's my parents? which may they be?"
Awkward silence—no reply—
Puzzled baby wonders why!
Father rises, bows politely—
Mother smiles, but not too brightly)—
Doctor mumbles like a dumb thing—
Nurse is busy mixing something—
Every symptom tends to show
You're decidedly *de trop*—

All. Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! **ho!**
Time's teetotum,
If you spin it,
Gives it's quotum
Once a minute.
I'll go bail
You hit the nail,
And if you fail
The deuce is in it!

You grow up, and you discover
What it is to be a lover.
Some young lady is selected—
Poor, perhaps, but well-connected
Whom you hail (for Love is blind)
As the Queen of fairy kind.
Though she's plain—perhaps unsightly,
Makes her face up—laces tightly,
In her form your fancy traces
All the gifts of all the graces.

Rivals none the maiden woo,
So you take her and she takes you!

All. Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho!
Joke beginning,
Never ceases,
Till your inning
Time releases,
On your way
You blindly stray,
And day by day
The joke increases!

Ten years later—Time progresses—
Sours your temper—thins your tresses
Fancy, then, her chain relaxes;
Rates are facts and so are taxes.
Fairy Queen's no longer young—
Fairy Queen has got a tongue.
Twins have probably intruded—
Quite unbidden—just as you did—
They're a source of care and trouble—
Just as you were—only double.
Comes at last the final stroke—
Time has had his little joke!

All. Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho!
Daily driven
(Wife as drover)
Ill you've thriven—
Ne'er in clover:
Lastly, when
Three-score and ten
(And not till then),
The joke is over!
Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho!
Then—and then
The joke is over!

[*Exeunt* SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS. *Manet* KING

King. (*putting on his crown again*). It's all very well. I always like to look on the humorous side of things; but I do *not* think I ought to be required to write libels on my own moral character. Naturally, I see the joke of it—anybody would—but Zara's coming home to-day; she's no longer a child, and I confess I should *not* like her to see my Opera—though it's uncommonly well written; and I should be sorry if the *Palace Peeper* got into her hands—though it's certainly smart—very smart indeed. It is almost a pity that I have to buy up the whole edition, because it's really too good to be lost. And Lady Sophy—that blameless type of perfect womanhood! Great heavens, what would *she* say if the Second Housemaid business happened to meet *her* pure blue eye!

Enter LADY SOPHY.

Lady S. My monarch is soliloquizing. I will withdraw. (*Going.*)

King. No—pray don't go. Now I'll give you fifty chances, and you won't guess whom I was thinking of.

Lady S. Alas, sir, I know too well. Ah! King, it's an old, old story, and I'm well nigh weary of it! Be warned in time—from my heart I pity you, but I am not for you! (*Going.*)

King. But hear what I have to say.

Lady S. It is useless. Listen. In the course of a long and adventurous career in the principal European Courts, it has been revealed to me that I unconsciously exercise a weird and supernatural fascination over all Crowned Heads. So irresistible is this singular property, that there is not a European Monarch who has not implored me, with tears in his eyes, to quit his kingdom, and take my fatal charms elsewhere. As time was getting on it occurred to me that by descending several pegs in the scale of Respectability I might qualify your Majesty for my hand. Actuated by this humane motive and happening to possess Respectability enough for Six, I consented to confer Respectability enough for Four upon your two younger daughters—but although I have, alas, only Respectability enough for Two left, there is still, as I gather from the public press of this country (*producing the* Palace Peeper), a considerable balance in my favour.

King (*aside*). Da——! (*Aloud.*) May I ask how you came by this?

Lady S. It was handed to me by the officer who holds the position of Public Exploder to your Imperial Majesty.

King. And surely, Lady Sophy, surely you are not so unjust as to place any faith in the irresponsible gabble of the Society press!

Lady S. (*referring to paper*). I read on the authority of Senox Senior that your Majesty was seen dancing with your Second Housemaid on the Oriental Platform of the Tivoli Gardens. That is untrue?

King. Absolutely. Our Second Housemaid has only one leg.

Lady S. (*suspiciously*). How do you know that?

King. Common report, I give you my honour.

Lady S. It may be so. I further read—and the statement is vouched for by no less an authority than Mephistopheles Mino—that your Majesty indulges in a bath of hot rum-punch every morning. I trust I do not lay myself open to the charge of displaying an indelicate curiosity as to the mysteries of the

royal dressing-room when I ask if there is any foundation for this statement?

King. None whatever. When our medical adviser exhibits rum-punch it is as a draught, not as a fomentation. As to our bath, our valet plays the garden hose upon us every morning.

Lady S. (*shocked*). Oh, pray—pray spare me these unseemly details. Well, you are a Despot—have you taken steps to slay this scribbler?

King. Well, no—I have *not* gone so far as that. After all, it's the poor devils living, you know.

Lady S. It is the poor devil's living that surprises me. If this man lies, there is no recognized punishment that is sufficiently terrible for him.

King. That's precisely it. I—I am waiting until a punishment is discovered that will exactly meet the enormity of the case. I am in constant communication with the Mikado of Japan, who is a leading authority on such points; and moreover, I have the ground plans and sectional elevations of several capital punishments in my desk at this moment. Oh, Lady Sophy, as you are powerful, be merciful!

DUET.—KING AND LADY SOPHY.

King. Subjected to your heavenly gaze
(Poetical phrase)
My brain is turned completely.
Observe me now,
No Monarch, I vow,
Was ever so far afflicted?

Lady S. I'm pleased with that poetical phrase,
"A heavenly gaze,"
But though you put it neatly,
Say what you will,
These paragraphs still
Remain uncontradicted.
Come, crush me this contemptible worm
(A forcible term),
If he's assailed you wrongly.
The rage display,
Which, as you say,
Has moved your Majesty lately.

King. Though I admit that forcible term,
"Contemptible worm,"
Appeals to me most strongly,
To treat this pest
As you suggest
Would pain my Majesty greatly

Lady S. This writer lies!

King. Yes, bother his eyes!

Lady S. He lives, you say?

King. In a sort of way.

Lady S. Then have him shot.
King. Decidedly not.
Lady S. Or crush him flat.
King. I cannot do that.
Both. O royal Rex,
My / Her } blameless sex.
Abhors such conduct shady.
You / I } plead in vain,
You / I } never will gain
Respectable English lady!

[*Dance of repudiation by* LADY SOPHY. *Exit, followed by* KING.

March. Enter all the Court, *heralding the arrival of the* PRINCESS ZARA, *who enters, escorted by* CAPTAIN FITZ-BATTLEAXE *and four* Troopers, *all in the full uniform of the First Life Guards.*

CHORUS.

Oh, maiden, rich
In Girton lore,
That wisdom which
We prized before,
We do confess
Is nothingness,
And rather less,
Perhaps, than more.
On each of us
Thy learning shed.
On calculus
May we be fed.
And teach us, please,
To speak with ease
All languages,
Alive and dead!

SOLO.—PRINCESS AND CHORUS.

Zara. Five years have flown since I took wing—
Time flies, and his footstep ne'er retards—
I'm the eldest daughter of your king.
Troopers. And we are her escort—First Life Guards!
On the royal yacht,
When the waves were white,
In a helmet hot
And a tunic tight,
And our great big boots,
We defied the storm:
For we're not recruits,
And his uniform

A well-drilled trooper ne'er discards—
And we are her escort—First Life Guards!

Zara. These gentlemen I present to you,
The pride and boast of their barrack-yards;
They've taken, oh, such care of me!

Troopers. For we are her escort—First Life Guards!
When the tempest rose,
And the ship went *so*—
Do you suppose
We were ill? No, no!
Though a qualmish lot
In a tunic tight,
And a helmet hot,
And a breastplate bright
(Which a well-drilled trooper ne'er discards),
We stood as her escort—First Life Guards!

FULL CHORUS.

Knightsbridge nursemaids—serving fairies—
Stars of proud Belgravian airies;
At stern duty's call you leave them,
Though you know how that must grieve them!

Zara. Tantantarara-rara-rara!

Capt. Fitz. Trumpet-call of Princess Zara!

Chorus. That's trump-call, and they're all trump cards—
They are her escort—First Life Guards!

ENSEMBLE.

CHORUS.

Ladies. Knightsbridge nursemaids, etc.

Men. When soldier seeks, etc.

PRINCESS ZARA AND FITZBATTLEAXE (*aside*).

Oh! the hours are gold,
And the joys untold,
When my eyes behold
My beloved Princess;
And the years will seem
But a brief day-dream,
In the joy extreme
Of our happiness.

Full Chorus. Knightsbridge nursemaids—serving fairies, etc.

Enter KING, PRINCESSES NEKAYA *and* KALYBA, *and* LADY SOPHY. *As the* KING *enters the escort present arms.*

King. Zara! my beloved daughter! Why, how well you look, and how lovely you have grown! (*Embraces her.*)

Zara. My dear father! (*Embracing him.*) And my two beautiful little sisters! (*Embracing them.*)

Nek. Not beautiful.

Kal. Nice looking.

Zara. But first let me present to you the English warrior who commands my escort, and who has taken, oh! such care of me during the voyage—Captain Fitzbattleaxe!

Troopers. The First Life Guards.
When the tempest rose,
And the ship went *so*—

[CAPT. FITZBATTLEAXE *motions them to be silent. The* Troopers *place themselves in the four corners of the stage, standing at ease, immovably, as if on sentry. Each is surrounded by an admiring group of young* Ladies, *of whom they take no notice.*

King (*to* CAPT. FITZ.). Sir, you come from a country where every virtue flourishes. We trust that you will not criticize too severely such shortcomings as you may detect in our semi-barbarous society.

Fitz. (*looking at* ZABA). Sir, I have eyes for nothing but the blameless and the beautiful.

King. We thank you—he is really very polite! (LADY SOPHY, *who has been greatly scandalized by the attentions paid to the* Lifeguardsmen *by the young* Ladies, *marches the* PRINCESSES NEKAYA *and* KALYBA *towards an exit.*) Lady Sophy, do not leave us.

Lady S. Sir, your children are young, and, so far, innocent. If they are to remain so, it is necessary that they be at once removed from the contamination of their present disgraceful surroundings. (*She marches them off.*)

King (*whose attention has thus been called to the proceedings of the young* Ladies—*aside*). Dear, dear! They really shouldn't. (*Aloud.*) Captain Fitzbattleaxe.

Fitz. Sir.

King. Your troopers appear to be receiving a troublesome amount of attention from those young ladies. I know how strict you English soldiers are, and I should be extremely distressed if anything occurred to shock their puritanical British sensitiveness.

Fitz. Oh, I don't think there's any chance of that.

King. You think not? They won't be offended?

Fitz. Oh no! They are quite hardened to it. They get a good deal of that sort of thing, standing sentry at the Horse Guards.

King. It's English, is it?

Fitz. It's particularly English.

King. Then, of course, it's all right. Pray proceed, ladies, it's particularly English. Come, my daughter, for we have much to say to each other.

Zara. Farewell, Captain Fitzbattleaxe! I cannot thank you too emphatically for the devoted care with which you have watched over me during our long and eventful voyage.

DUET.—ZARA AND CAPTAIN FITZBATTLEAXE.

Zara. Ah! gallant soldier, brave and true
In tented field and tourney,
I grieve to have occasioned you
So very long a journey.
A British soldier gives up all—
His home and island beauty—
When summoned by the trumpet-call
Of Regimental duty!

All. Tantantarara-rara-rara!
Trumpet-call of Princess Zara!

ENSEMBLE.

MEN. FITZBATTLEAXE AND ZARA (*aside*).

A British warrior gives up all, etc. Oh, my joy, my pride,
My delight to hide,
LADIES. Let us sing, aside,
Knightsbridge nursemaids, etc. What in truth we feel.
Let us whisper low
Of our love's glad glow,
Lest the truth we show
We would fain conceal.

Fitz. Such escort duty, as his due,
To young Lifeguardsman falling
Completely reconciles him to
His uneventful calling.
When soldier seeks Utopian glades
In charge of Youth and Beauty,
Then pleasure merely masquerades
As Regimental Duty!

All. Tantantarara-rara-rara!
Trumpet-call of Princess Zara!

ENSEMBLE.

CHORUS. FITZBATTLEAXE AND ZARA (*aside*).

MEN. Oh, the hours are gold,
And the joys untold,
A British warrior, etc. When my eyes behold
My beloved Princess;
WOMEN. And the year will seem
Knightsbridge nursemaids, etc. But a brief day-dream,
In the joy extreme
Of our happiness!

[*Exeunt* KING *and* PRINCESS *in one direction*, Lifeguardsmen *and* Crowd *in opposite direction.*

Enter, at back, SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS, *who watch the* PRINCESS *as she goes off.* SCAPHIO *is seated, shaking violently, and obviously under the influence of some strong emotion.*

Phan. There—tell me, Scaphio, is she not beautiful? Can you wonder that I love her so passionately?

Sca. No. She is extraordinarily—miraculously lovely! Good heavens, what a singularly beautiful girl!

Phan. I knew you would say so!

Sca. What exquisite charm of manner! What surprising delicacy of gesture! Why, she's a goddess! a very goddess!

Phan. (*rather taken aback*). Yes—she's—she's an attractive girl.

Sca. Attractive? Why, you must be blind! She's entrancing—enthralling!—intoxicating! (*Aside.*) God bless my heart, what's the matter with me?

Phan. (*alarmed*). Yes. You—you promised to help me to get her father's consent, you know.

Sca. Promised! Yes, but the convulsion has come, my good boy! It is she—my ideal! Why, what's this? (*Staggering.*) Phantis! Stop me—I'm going mad—mad with the love of her!

Phan. Scaphio, compose yourself, I beg. The girl is perfectly opaque! Besides, remember—each of us is helpless without the other. You can't succeed without my consent, you know.

Sca. And you dare to threaten? Oh, ungrateful! When you came to me, palsied with love for this girl, and implored my assistance, did I not unhesitatingly promise it? And this is the return you make? Out of my sight, ingrate! (*Aside.*) Dear! dear! what is the matter with me?

Enter CAPT. FITZBATTLEAXE *and* ZARA.

Zara. Dear me. I'm afraid we are interrupting a *tête-à-tête.*

Sca. (*breathlessly*). No, no. You come very appropriately. To be brief, we—we love you—this man and I—madly—passionately!

Zara. Sir!

Sca. And we don't know how we are to settle which of us is to marry you.

Fitz. Zara, this is very awkward.

Sca. (*very much overcome*). I—I am paralyzed by the singular radiance of your extraordinary loveliness. I know I am incoherent. I never was like this before—it shall not occur again. I—shall be fluent presently.

Zara (*aside*). Oh, dear Captain Fitzbattleaxe, what *is* to be done?

Fitz. (*aside*). Leave it to me—I'll manage it. (*Aloud.*) It's a common situation. Why not settle it in the English fashion?

Both. The English fashion? What is that?

Fitz. It's very simple. In England, when two gentlemen are in love with the same lady, and until it is settled which gentleman is to blow out the brains of the other, it is provided,

by the Rival Admirers' Clauses Consolidation Act, that the lady shall be entrusted to an officer of Household Cavalry as stakeholder, who is bound to hand her over to the survivor (on the Tontine principle) in a good condition of substantial and decorative repair.

Sca. Reasonable wear and tear and damages by fire excepted?

Fitz. Exactly.

Phan. Well, that seems very reasonable. (*To* SCAPHIO.) What do you say—Shall we entrust her to this officer of Household Cavalry? It will give us time.

Sca. (*trembling violently*). I—I am not at present in a condition to think it out coolly—but if he *is* an officer of Household Cavalry, and if the Princess consents——

Zara. Alas, dear sirs, I have no alternative—under the Rival Admirers' Clauses Consolidation Act!

Fitz. Good—then that's settled.

QUARTETTE.

FITZBATTLEAXE, ZARA, SCAPHIO, AND PHANTIS.

Fitz.
It's understood, I think, all round
That, by the English custom bound.
I hold the lady safe and sound
In trust for either rival,
Until you clearly testify
By sword or pistol, by-and-by,
Which gentleman prefers to die,
And which prefers survival.

ENSEMBLE.

SCA. AND PHAN.
It's clearly understood, all round,
That, by your English custom bound,
He holds the lady safe and sound
In trust for either rival,
Until we clearly testify
By sword and pistol, by-and-by,
Which gentleman prefers to die,
And which prefers survival.

ZARA AND FITZ (*aside*).
We stand, I think, on safish ground;
Our senses weak it will astound
If either gentleman is found
Prepared to meet his rival.
Their machinations we defy;
We won't be parted, you and I—
Of bloodshed each is rather shy—
They both prefer survival!

Phan. (*aside to* FITZ.).
If I should die and he should live,
To you, without reserve, I give
Her heart so young and sensitive,
And all her predilections.

Sca. (*aside to* FITZ.).
If he should live and I should die,
I see no kind of reason why
You should not, if you wish it, try
To gain her young affections.

ENSEMBLE.

SCA. AND PHAN. (*angrily to each other*).
If I should die and you should live,
To this young officer I give
Her heart so soft and sensitive,
And all her predilections.
If you should live and I should die,
I see no kind of reason why
He should not, if he chooses try,
To win her young affections.

FITZ. AND ZARA (*aside*).
As both of us are positive
That both of them intend to live,
There's nothing in the case to give,
Us cause for grave reflections.
As both will live and neither die
I see no kind of reason why
I should not, if I wish it, try
To gain your young affections!

[*Exeunt* SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS *together*.

DUET.—ZARA AND FITZBATTLEAXE.

ENSEMBLE.

Oh, admirable art!
Oh, neatly-planned intention!
Oh, happy intervention—
Oh, well-constructed plot!
When sages try to part
Two loving hearts in fusion,
Their wisdom's a delusion,
And learning serves them **not**!

Fitz. Until quite plain
Is their intent,
These sages twain
I represent.
Now please infer
That, nothing loth,
You're henceforth, as it were,
Engaged to marry both—
Then take it that I represent the two—
On that hypothesis, what would you do?

Zara (aside). What would I do? what would I do?

Zara. In such a case,
Upon your breast,
My blushing face
I think I'd rest— (*Doing so.*)
Then perhaps I might
Demurely say—
"I find this breastplate bright
Is sorely in the way!"
That is, supposing it were true
That I'm engaged to both—and both were you!

ENSEMBLE.

Our mortal race
Is never blest—
There's no such case
As perfect rest;

Some petty blight
Asserts its sway!
Some crumpled roseleaf light
Is always in the way!

[*Exit* FITZBATTLEAXE. *Manet* ZARA.

Zara (*looking off, in the direction in which* SCAPHIO *and* PHANTH *have gone*). Poor, trusting, simple-minded, and affectionate old gentlemen! I'm really sorry for them! How strange it is that when the flower of a man's youth has faded, he seems to lose all charm in a woman's eyes; and how true are the words of my expurgated Juvenal—

"*Festinat decurrere velox*
Flosculus, angustæ, miserœque brevissima vitæ
Portio!"

Enter KING.

King. My daughter! At last we are alone together.

Zara. Yes, and I'm glad we are, for I want to speak to you very seriously. Do you know this paper?

King (*aside*). Da——! (*Aloud.*) Oh yes—I've—I've seen it. Where in the world did you get this from?

Zara. It was given to me by Lady Sophy—my sisters' governess.

King (*aside*). Lady Sophy's an angel, but I do sometimes wish she'd mind her own business! (*Aloud.*) It's—ha! ha! —it's rather humorous.

Zara. I see nothing humorous in it. I only see that you, the despotic King of this country, are made the subject of the most scandalous insinuations. Why do you permit these things?

King. Well, they appeal to my sense of humour. It's the only really comic paper in Utopia, and I wouldn't be without it for the world.

Zara. If it had any literary merit I could understand it.

King. Oh, it *has* literary merit. Oh, distinctly, it has literary merit.

Zara. My dear father, it's mere ungrammatical twaddle.

King. Oh, it's not ungrammatical. I can't allow that. Unpleasantly personal, perhaps, but written with an epigrammatical point that is very rare nowadays—very rare indeed.

Zara (*looking at cartoon*). Why do they represent you with such a big nose?

King (*looking at cartoon*). Eh? Yes, it *is* a big one! Why, the fact is that, in the cartoons of a comic paper, the size of

your nose always varies inversely as the square of your popularity. It's the rule.

Zara. Then you must be at a tremendous discount, just now! I see a notice of a new piece called "King Tuppence," in which an English tenor has the audacity to personate you on a public stage. I can only say that I am surprised that any English tenor should lend himself to such degrading personalities.

King. Oh, he's not really English. As it happens he's a Utopian, but he calls himself English.

Zara. Calls himself English?

King. Yes. Bless you, they wouldn't listen to any tenor who didn't call himself English.

Zara. And you permit this insolent buffoon to caricature you in a pointless burlesque! My dear father—if you were a free agent, you would never permit these outrages.

King (*almost in tears*). Zara, I—I admit I am not altogether a free agent. I—I am controlled. I try to make the best of it, but sometimes I find it very difficult—very difficult indeed. Nominally a Despot, I am, between ourselves, the helpless tool of two unscrupulous Wise Men, who insist on my falling in with all their wishes and threaten to denounce me for immediate explosion if I remonstrate! (*Breaks down completely.*)

Zara. My poor father! Now listen to me. With a view to remodelling the political and social institutions of Utopia, I have brought with me six representatives of the principal causes that have tended to make England the powerful, happy, and blameless country which the consensus of European civilization has declared it to be. Place yourself unreservedly in the hands of these gentlemen, and they will reorganize your country on a footing that will enable you to defy your persecutors. They are all now washing their hands after their journey. Shall I introduce them?

King. My dear Zara, how can I thank you? I will consent to anything that will release me from the abominable tyranny of these two men. (*Calling.*) What ho! Without there!

Enter CALYNX.

Summon my court without an instant's delay!

[*Exit* CALYNX.

FINALE.

Enter Every one, *except the* Flowers of Progress.

CHORUS.

Although your Royal summons to appear
From courtesy was singularly free,

Obedient to that summons we are here—
What would your Majesty?

RECITATIVE.—KING.

My worthy people, my beloved daughter
Most thoughtfully has brought with her from England
The types of all the causes that have made
That great and glorious country what it is.

Chorus. Oh, joy unbounded!

Sca., Tar., and Phan. (*aside*). Why, what *does* this mean?

RECITATIVE.—ZARA.

Attend to me, Utopian populace,
Ye South Pacific Island viviparians;
All, in the abstract, types of courtly grace.
Yet, when compared with Britain's glorious race,
But little better than half-clothed barbarians!

CHORUS.

That's true—we South Pacific viviparians,
Contrasted when
With Englishmen,
Are little better than half-clothed barbarians!

Enter all the Flowers of Progress, *led by* FITZBATTLEAXE.

SOLO.—ZARA. (*Presenting* CAPTAIN FITZBATTLEAXE.)

When Britain sounds the trump of war
(And Europe trembles),
The army of that conqueror
In serried ranks assembles;
'Tis then this warrior's eyes and sabre gleam
For our protection—
He represents a military scheme
In all its proud perfection!

Fitz. Yes—yes—
I represent a military scheme
In all its proud perfection!

Chorus. Ulahlica! Ulahlica! Ulahlica!

SOLO.—ZARA. (*Presenting* SIR BAILEY BARRE, Q.C., M.P.)

A complicated gentleman allow me to present,
Of all the arts and faculties the terse embodiment,
He's a great Arithmetician who can demonstrate with ease
That two and two are three, or five, or anything you please;
An eminent Logician who can make it clear to you
That black is white—when looked at from the proper point of view;
A marvellous Philologist who'll undertake to show
That "yes" is but another and a neater form of "no."

Sir Bailey. Yes—yes—yes—
Oh "yes" is but another and a neater form of "no."
All preconceived ideas on any subject I can scout,
And demonstrate beyond all possibility of doubt,
That whether you're an honest man or whether you're a thief
Depends on whose solicitor has given me my brief.

Chorus. Yes—yes—yes
That whether you're an honest man, etc.
Ulahlica! Ulahlica! Ulahlica!

SOLO.—ZARA. (*Presenting* LORD DRAMALEIGH *and* County Councillor.)

What these may be, Utopians all
Perhaps you'll hardly guess—
They're types of England's physical
And moral cleanliness.
This is a Lord High Chamberlain
Of purity the gauge—
He'll cleanse our Court from moral stain
And purify our Stage.

Lord Dram. Yes—yes—yes—
Court reputations I revise,
And presentations scrutinize,
New plays I read with jealous eyes,
And purify the Stage.

Chorus. Yes—yes—yes—
New plays, etc.

Zara. This County Councillor acclaim,
Great Britain's latest toy—
On anything you like to name
His talents he'll employ—
All streets and squares he'll purify
Within your city walls,
And keep meanwhile a modest eye
On wicked music halls.

C.C. Yes—yes—yes—
In towns I make improvements great,
Which go to swell the County Rate—
I dwelling-houses sanitate,
And purify the Halls!

Chorus. Yes—yes—yes—
He'll dwelling-houses, etc.
Ulahlica! Ulahlica! Ulahlica!

SOLO.—ZARA. (*Presenting* MR. GOLDBURY.)

A Company Promoter this, with special education,
Which teaches what Contango means and also Backwardation—
To speculators he supplies a grand financial leaven,
Time was when *two* were company—but now it must be seven.

Mr. Gold. Yes—yes—yes—
Stupendous loans to foreign thrones
I've largely advocated;
In ginger-pops and peppermint-drops
I've freely speculated;
Then mines of gold, of wealth untold,
Successfully I've floated,
And sudden falls in apple-stalls
Occasionally quoted:
And soon or late I always call
For Stock Exchange quotation—
No scheme's too great and none too small
For Companification!

Chorus. Then soon or late, etc.
Ulahlica! Ulahlica! Ulahlica!

Zara. (*Presenting* Captain Sir Edward Corcoran, R.N.)

And lastly I present
Great Britain's proudest boast,
Who from the blows
Of foreign foes
Protects her sea-girt coast—
And if you ask him in respectful tone,
He'll show you how you may protect your own!

Solo.—Captain Corcoran.

I'm Captain Corcoran, K.C.B.,
I'll teach you how we rule the sea,
And terrify the simple Gaul.
And how the Saxon and the Celt
Their Europe-shaking blows have dealt
With Maxim gun and Nordenfelt
(Or will, when the occasion calls),
If sailor-like you'd play your cards
Unbend your sails, and lower your yards,
Unstep your masts—you'll never want 'em more.
Though we're no longer hearts of oak,
Yet we can steer and we can stoke,
And, thanks to coal, and thanks to coke,
We never run a ship ashore!

All. What never?
Capt. No, never!
All. What, *never*?
Capt. Hardly ever!
All. Hardly ever run a ship ashore!
Then give three cheers, and three cheers more,
For the tar who never runs his ship ashore;
Then give three cheers, and three cheers more,
For he never runs his ship ashore!

CHORUS.

All hail, ye types of England's power—
Ye heaven-enlightened band!
We bless the day, and bless the hour
That brought you to our land.

QUARTETTE.

Ye wanderers from a mighty State
Oh, teach us how to legislate—
Your lightest word will carry weight
In our attentive ears.
Oh, teach the natives of this land
(Who are not quick to understand)
How to work off their social and
Political arrears!

Capt. Fitz. Increase your army!
Lord Dram. Purify your Court!
Capt. Cor. Get up your steam and cut your canvas short!
Sir B. Bar. To speak on both sides teach your sluggish brains!
Mr. B., C.C. Widen your thoroughfares, and flush your drains!
Mr. Gold. Utopia's much too big for one small head—
I'll float it as a Company Limited!

King. A Company Limited? What may that be?
The term, I rather think, is new to me.

Chorus. A Company Limited? etc.

Sca., Phan., and Tarara (aside).
What does he mean? What does he mean?
Give us a kind of clue!
What does he mean? What does he mean?
What is he going to do?

SONG.—MR. GOLDBURY.

Some seven men form an Association
(If possible, all Peers and Baronets),
They start off with a public declaration
To what extent they mean to pay their debts.
That's called their Capital: if they are wary
They will not quote it at a sum immense.
The figure's immaterial—it may vary
From eighteen million down to eighteenpence.
I should put it rather low;
The good sense of doing so
Will be evident at once to any debtor,
When it's left to you to say
What amount you mean to pay,
Why, the lower you can put it at, the better,

Chorus. When it's left to you to say, etc.

They then proceed to trade with all who'll trust 'em,
Quite irrespective of their capital
(It's shady, but it's sanctified by custom);
Bank, Railway, Loan, or Panama Canal.

You can't embark on trading too tremendous—
It's strictly fair, and based on common sense—
If you succeed, your profits are stupendous—
And if you fail, pop goes your eighteenpence.
Make the money-spinner spin!
For you only stand to win,
And you'll never with dishonesty be twitted.
For nobody can know,
To a million or so.
To what extent your capital's committed!

Chorus. No, nobody can know, etc.

If you come to grief, and creditors are craving,
(For nothing that is planned by mortal head
Is certain in this Vale of Sorrow—saving
That one's Liability is Limited),—
Do you suppose that signifies perdition?
If so you're but a monentary dunce—
You merely file a Winding-up Petition,
And start another Company at once!
Though a Rothschild you may be
In your own capacity,
As a Company you've come to utter sorrow—
But the Liquidators say,
"Never mind—you needn't pay,"
So you start another company to-morrow!

Chorus. But the Liquidators say, etc.

RECITATIVE.

King. Well, at first sight it strikes us as dishonest,
But if it's good enough for virtuous England—
The first commercial country in the world—
It's good enough for us.

Sca. Phan., and Tarara. You'd best take care—
(*aside to* KING). Please recollect *we* have not been consulted.

King (*not heeding them*). And do I understand you that Great Britain
Upon this Joint Stock principle is governed?

Mr. Gold. We haven't come to that, exactly—but
We're tending rapidly in that direction.
The date's not distant.

King (*enthusiastically*). We will be before you!
We'll go down to Posterity renowned
As the First Sovereign in Christendom
Who registered his Crown and Country under
The Joint Stock Company's Act of Sixty-Two.

All. Ulahlica! Ulahlica! Ulahlica!

SOLO.—KING.

Henceforward, of a verity,
With Fame ourselves we link—
We'll go down to Posterity
Of sovereigns all the pink!

Sca., Phan., and Tar. (*aside to King*). If you've the mad temerity
Our wishes thus to blink,
You'll go down to Posterity
Much earlier than you think!

Tarara (*correcting them*). He'll go *up* to Posterity,
If *I* inflict the blow!

Sca. and Phan. (*angrily*). He'll go *down* to Posterity.
We think we ought to know!

Tarara (*explaining*). He'll go *up* to Posterity,
Blown up with dynamite!

Sca. and Phan. (*apologetically*). He'll go *up* to Posterity;
Of course he will, you're right!

ENSEMBLE.

KING, LADY SOPHY, NEK., KAL., CAL., AND CHORUS.	SCA., PHAN., AND TARARA (*aside*).	FITZBATTLEAXE AND ZARA (*aside*).
Henceforward of a verity With fame ourselves we link, And go down to Posterity Of sovereigns all the pink!	If he has the temerity Our wishes thus to blink, He'll go up to Posterity Much earlier than they think!	Who love with all sincerity, Their lives may safely link; And as for our Posterity— We don't care what they think!

CHORUS.

Let's seal this mercantile pact—
The step we ne'er shall rue—
It gives whatever we lacked—
The statement's strictly true.
All hail, astonishing Fact!
All hail, Invention new—
The Joint Stock Company's Act—
The Act of Sixty-Two!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Throne Room in the Palace. Night.* FITZBATTLEAXE *discovered, singing to* ZARA.

RECITATIVE.—FITZ.

Oh, Zara, my beloved one, bear with me!
Ah, do not laugh at my attempted C!
Repent not, mocking maid, thy girlhood's choice—
The fervour of my love affects my voice!

SONG.—FITZ.

A tenor, all singers above,
(This doesn't admit of a question),
Should keep himself quiet,
Attend to his diet
And carefully nurse his digestion:
But when he is madly in love
It's certain to tell on his singing—
You can't do chromatics
With proper emphatics
When anguish your bosom is wringing!
When distracted with worries in plenty,
And his pulse is a hundred and twenty,
And his fluttering bosom the slave of mistrust is,
A tenor can't do himself justice.
Now observe—(*sings a high note*),
You see, I can't do myself justice!

I could sing, if my fervour were mock,
It's easy enough if you're acting—
But when one's emotion
Is born of devotion
You mustn't be over-exacting.
One ought to be firm as a rock
To venture a shake in *vibrato*,
When fervour's expected
Keep cool and collected
Or never attempt *agitato*.
But, of course, when his tongue is of leather,
And his lips appear pasted together,
And his sensitive palate as dry as a crust is,
A tenor can't do himself justice.
Now observe—(*sings a cadence*),
It's no use—I can't do myself justice!

Zara. Why, Arthur, what *does* it matter? When the higher qualities of the heart are all that can be desired, the higher notes of the voice are matters of comparative insignificance. Who thinks slightingly of the cocoanut because it is husky? Besides (*demurely*) you are not singing for an engagement. (*Putting her hand in his.*) You have that already!

Fitz. How good and wise you are! How unerringly your practised brain winnows the wheat from the chaff—the material from the merely incidental!

Zara. My Girton training, Arthur. At Girton all is wheat, and idle chaff is never heard within its walls! But tell me, is not all working marvellously well? Have not our Flowers of Progress more than justified their name?

Fitz. We have indeed done our best. Captain Corcoran and I have, in concert, thoroughly remodelled the sister-services—

and upon so sound a basis that the South Pacific trembles at the name of Utopia!

Zara. How clever of you!

Fitz. Clever? Not a bit. It's as easy as possible when the Admiralty and Horse Guards are not there to interfere. And so with the others. Freed from the trammels imposed upon them by idle Acts of Parliament, all have given their natural talents full play and introduced reforms which, even in England, were never dreamt of!

Zara. But perhaps the most beneficent change of all has been effected by Mr. Goldbury who, discarding the exploded theory that some strange magic lies hidden in the number Seven, has applied the Limited Liability principle to individuals, and every man, woman, and child is now a Company Limited with liability restricted to the amount of his declared Capital! There is not a christened baby in Utopia who has not already issued his little Prospectus!

Fitz. Marvellous is the power of a Civilization which can transmute, by a word, a Limited Income into an Income (*Limited*).

Zara. Reform has not stopped here—it has been applied even to the costume of our people. Discarding their own barbaric dress, the natives of our land have unanimously adopted the tasteful fashions of England in all their rich entirety. Scaphio and Phantis have undertaken a contract to supply the whole of Utopia with clothing designed upon the most approved English models—and the first Drawing-Room under the new state of things is to be held here this evening.

Fitz. But Drawing-Rooms are always held in the afternoon.

Zara. Ah, we've improved upon that. We all look so much better by candle-light! And when I tell you, dearest, that my court train has just arrived, you will understand that I am longing to go and try it on.

Fitz. Then we must part?

Zara. Necessarily, for a time.

Fitz. Just as I wanted to tell you, with all the passionate enthusiasm of my nature, how deeply, how devotedly I love you!

Zara. Hush! Are these the accents of a heart that really feels? True love does not indulge in declamation—its voice is sweet, and soft, and low. The west wind whispers when he woos the poplars!

DUET.—ZARA AND FITZBATTLEAXE.

Zara. Words of love too loudly spoken
Ring their own untimely knell;

Noisy vows are rudely broken,
Soft the song of Philomel.

Whisper sweetly, whisper slowly,
Hour by hour and day by day;
Sweet and low as accents holy
Are the notes of lover's lay!

Both. Sweet and low, etc.

Fitz. Let the conqueror, flushed with glory,
Bid his noisy clarions bray;
Lovers tell their artless story
In a whispered virelay.
False is he whose vows allurin
Make the listening echoes ring;
Sweet and low when all-enduring,
Are the songs that lovers sing!

Both. Sweet and low, etc. [*Exit* ZARA.

Enter KING, *dressed as Field Marshal.*

King. To a Monarch who has been accustomed to the uncontrolled use of his limbs, the costume of a British Field Marshal is, perhaps, at first, a little cramping. Are you sure that this is all right? It's not a practical joke, is it? No one has a keener sense of humour than I have, but the First Statutory Cabinet Council of Utopia (*Limited*) must be conducted with dignity and impressiveness. Now, where are the other five who signed the Articles of Association?

Fitz. Sir, they are here.

Enter LORD DRAMALEIGH, CAPTAIN CORCORAN, SIR BAILEY BARRE, MR. BLUSHINGTON, *and* MR. GOLDBURY *from different entrances.*

King. Oh! (*Addressing them.*) Gentlemen, our daughter holds her first Drawing-Room in half an hour, and we shall have time to make our half-yearly report in the interval. I am necessarily unfamiliar with the forms of an English Cabinet Council—perhaps the Lord Chamberlain will kindly put us in the way of doing the thing properly, and with due regard to the solemnity of the occasion.

Lord Dram. Certainly—nothing simpler. Kindly bring your chairs forward—his Majesty will, of course, preside.

[*They range their chairs across stage like Christy Minstrels.* KING *sits centre,* LORD DRAMLEIGH *on his left,* MR. GOLDBURY *on his right,* CAPTAIN CORCORAN *left of* LORD DRAMALEIGH, CAPTAIN FITZBATTLEAXE *right of* MR. GOLDBURY, MR. BLUSHINGTON *extreme right,* SIR BAILEY BARRE *extreme left.*

King. Like this?

Lord Dram. Like this.

King. We take your word for it that this is all right. You are not making fun of us? This is in accordance with the practice at the Court of St. James's?

Lord Dram. Well, it is in accordance with the practice at the Court of St. James's Hall.

King. Oh! it seems odd, but never mind.

SONG.—KING.

Society has quite forsaken all her wicked courses,
Which empties our police courts, and abolishes divorces.
Chorus. Divorce is nearly obsolete in England.
King. No tolerance we show to undeserving rank and splendour;
For the higher his position is the greater the offender.
Chorus. That's a maxim that is prevalent in England.
King. No peeress at our Drawing-Room before the Presence passes
Who wouldn't be accepted by the lower-middle classes.
Each shady dame, whatever be her rank, is bowed out neatly.
Chorus. In short, this happy country has been Anglicized completely!
It really is surprising
What a thorough Anglicizing
We have brought about—Utopia's quite another land;
In her enterprising movements,
She is England—with improvements,
Which we dutifully offer to our mother-land!
King. Our city we have beautified—we've done it willy-nilly—
And all that isn't Belgrave Square is Strand and Piccadilly.
Chorus. We haven't any slummeries in England!
King. We have solved the labour question with discrimination polished,
So poverty is obsolete and hunger is abolished—
Chorus. We are going to abolish it in England.
King. The Chamberlain our native stage has purged, beyond a question,
Of "risky" situation and indelicate suggestion;
No piece is tolerated if it's costumed indiscreetly—
Chorus. In short, this happy country has been Anglicized completely!
It really is surprising, etc.
King. Our Peerage we've remodelled on an intellectual basis,
Which certainly is rough on our hereditary races—
Chorus. We are going to remodel it in England.
King. The Brewers and the Cotton Lords no longer seek admission,
And Literary Merit meets with proper recognition—
Chorus. As Literary Merit does in England!
King. Who knows but we may count among our intellectual chickens
Like you, an Earl of Thackeray and p'r'aps a Duke of Dickens—

Lord Fildes and Viscount Millais (when they come) we'll welcome sweetly—

Chorus. In short, this happy country has been Anglicized completely!

It really is surprising, etc.

[*At the end all rise and replace their chairs.*

King. Now then, for our First Drawing-Room. Where are the Princesses? What an extraordinary thing it is that since European looking-glasses have been supplied to the Royal bedrooms my daughters are invariably late!

Lord Dram. Sir, their Royal Highnesses await your pleasure in the Ante-Room.

King. Oh. Then request them to do us the favour to enter at once.

MARCH. *Enter all the* Royal Household, *including* (*besides the* Lord Chamberlain) *the* Vice-Chamberlain, *the* Master of the Horse, *the* Master of the Buckhounds, *the* Lord High Treasurer, *the* Lord Steward, *the* Comptroller of the Household, *the* Lord-in-Waiting, *the* Groom-in-Waiting, *the* Field Officer in Brigade Waiting, *the* Gold and Silver Stick, *and the* Gentlemen Ushers. *Then enter the three* Princesses (*their trains carried by* Pages of Honour), LADY SOPHY, *and the* Ladies-in-waiting.

King. My daughters, we are about to attempt a very solemn ceremonial, so no giggling, if you please. Now, my Lord Chamberlain, we are ready.

Lord Dram. Then, ladies and gentlemen, places if you please. His Majesty will take his place in front of the throne, and will be so obliging as to embrace all the *débutantes.* (LADY SOPHY, *much shocked.*)

King. What—must I really?

Lord Dram. Absolutely indispensable.

King. More jam for the *Palace Peeper!*

[*The* KING *takes his place in front of the throne, the* PRINCESS ZARA *on his left. The two younger* Princesses *on the left of* ZARA.

King. Now, is every one in his place?

Lord Dram. Every one is in his place.

King. Then let the revels commence.

Enter the Ladies *attending the Drawing-Room. They give their cards to the* Groom-in-Waiting, *who passes them to the* Lord-in-Waiting, *who passes them to the* Vice-Chamberlain, *who passes them to the* Lord Chamberlain, *who reads the*

names to the KING *as each lady approaches. The* Ladies *curtsy in succession to the* KING, *and the three* Princesses, *and pass out. When all the presentations have been accomplished, the* KING, Princesses, *and* LADY SOPHY *come forward, and all the* Ladies *re-enter.*

RECITATIVE.—KING.

This ceremonial our wish displays
To copy all Great Britain's courtly ways,
Though lofty aims catastrophe entail,
We'll gloriously succeed or nobly fail!

UNACCOMPANIED CHORUS.

Eagle high in cloudland soaring—
Sparrow twittering on a reed—
Tiger in the jungle roaring—
Frightened fawn in grassy mead—
Let the eagle, not the sparrow,
Be the object of your arrow—
Fix the tiger with your eye—
Pass the fawn in pity by.
Glory then will crown the day—
Glory, glory, anyway! [*Then exeunt all.*

Enter SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS, *now dressed as judges in red and ermine robes and undress wigs. They come down stage melodramatically—working together.*

DUET.—SCAPHIO AND PHANTIS.

Sca. With fury deep we burn—
Phan. We do—
We fume with smothered rage.
These Englishmen who rule supreme
Their undertaking they redeem
By stifling every harmless scheme
In which we both engage—
Sca. They do—
In which we both engage.
Both (*with great energy*). For this mustn't be, and this won't do,
If you'll back me, then I'll back you,
Let's both agree, and we'll pull things through,
For this mustn't be, and this won't do.
No, this won't do,
No, this won't do,
No, this mustn't be,
And this won't do.

Enter the KING.

King. Gentlemen, gentlemen—really! This unseemly display of energy within the Royal Precincts is altogether unpardonable. Pray what do you complain of?

Sca. (*furiously*). What do we complain of? Why, through the innovations introduced by the Flowers of Progress all our harmless schemes for making a provision for our old age are ruined. Our Matrimonial Agency is at a standstill, our Cheap Sherry business is in bankruptcy, our Army Clothing contracts are paralyzed, and even our Society paper, the *Palace Peeper*, is practically defunct!

King. Defunct? Is that so? Dear, dear, I am truly sorry.

Sca. Are you aware that Sir Bailey Barre has introduced a law of libel by which all editors of scurrilous newspapers are publicly flogged—as in England? And six of our editors have resigned in succession! Now, the editor of a scurrilous paper can stand a good deal—he takes a private thrashing as a matter of course—it's considered in his salary—but no gentleman likes to be publicly flogged.

King. Naturally. I shouldn't like it myself.

Phan. Then our burlesque Theatre is absolutely ruined!

King. Dear me. Well, theatrical property is not what it was.

Phan. Are you aware that the Lord Chamberlain, who has his own views as to the best means of elevating the national drama, has declined to license any play that is not in blank verse and three hundred years old—as in England?

Sca. And as if that wasn't enough, the County Councillor has ordered a four-foot wall to be built up right across the proscenium, in case of fire—as in England.

Phan. It's so hard on the company—who are liable to be roasted alive—and this has to be met by enormously increased salaries—as in England.

Sca. You probably know that we've contracted to supply the entire nation with a complete English outfit. But perhaps you do *not* know that, when we send in our bills, our customers plead liability limited to a declared capital of eighteenpence, and apply to be dealt with under the Winding-up Act—as in England?

King. Really, gentlemen, this is very irregular. If you will be so good as to formulate a detailed list of your grievances in writing, addressed to the Secretary of Utopia (*Limited*), they will be laid before the Board, in due course, at their next monthly meeting.

Sca. Are we to understand that we are defied?

King. That is the idea I intended to convey.

Phan. Defied! We are defied!

Sca. (*furiously*). Take care—you know our powers. Trifle with us, and you die!

TRIO.—SCAPHIO, PHANTIS, AND KING.

Sca. If you think that when banded in unity,
We may both be defied with impunity,
You are sadly misled of a verity!

Phan. If you value repose and tranquillity,
You'll revert to a state of docility,
Or prepare to regret your temerity!

King. If my speech is unduly refractory
You will find it a course satisfactory
At an early Board meeting to show it up.
Though if proper excuse you can trump any,
You may *wind* up a Limited Company,
You cannot conveniently *blow* it up!

[SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS *thoroughly baffled.*

King. (*dancing quietly*). Whene'er I chance to baffle you
I, also, dance a step or two—
Of this now guess the hidden sense:

[SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS *consider the question as* KING *continues dancing quietly—then give it up.*

It means—complete indifference

All three (*dancing quietly*). Indifference—indifference—
Of course it does—indifference!
You / We } might have guessed its hidden sense.
It means complete indifference!

[SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS *dancing furiously.*

King. (*dancing quietly*). As we've a dance for every mood
With *pas de trois* we will conclude.
What this may mean you all may guess—

Sca. and. Phan. } It typifies remorselessness!
King. } It means unruffled cheerfulness!

[KING *dances off placidly as* SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS *dance furiously.*

Phan. (*breathless*). He's right—we are helpless! He's no longer a human being—he's a Corporation, and so long as he confines himself to his Articles of Association we can't touch him! What are we to do?

Sca. Do? Raise a Revolution, repeal the Act of Sixty-Two, reconvert him into an individual, and insist on his immediate explosion! (TARARA *enters.*) Tarara, come here; you're the very man we want.

Tar. Certainly, allow me. (*Offers a cracker to each, they snatch them away impatiently.*) That's rude.

Sca. We have no time for idle forms. You wish to succeed to the throne?

Tar. Naturally.

Sca. Then you won't unless you join us. The King has defied us, and, as matters stand, we are helpless. So are you. We must devise some plot at once to bring the people about his ears.

Tar. A plot?

Phan. Yes, a plot of superhuman subtlety. Have you such a thing about you?

Tar. (*feeling*). No, I think not. No. There's one on my dressing-table.

Sca. We can't wait—we must concoct one at once, and put it into execution without delay. There is not a moment to spare!

TRIO.—SCAPHIO, PHANTIS, AND TARARA.

ENSEMBLE.

With wily brain upon the spot
A private plot we'll plan,
The most ingenious private plot
Since private plots began.
That's understood. So far we've got
And, striking while the iron's hot,
We'll now determine like a shot
The details of this private plot.

Sca. I think we ought— [*Whispers.*
Phan. and Tar. Such bosh I never heard!
Phan. Ah! happy thought!— [*Whispers.*
Sca. and Tar. How utterly dashed absurd!
Tar. *I'll* tell you how— [*Whispers.*
Sca. and Phan. Why, what put that in your head?
Sca. I've got it now— [*Whispers.*
Oh! take him away to bed!
Phan. Oh, put him to bed!
Tar. Oh, put him to bed!
Sca. What! put *me* to bed?
Phan. and Tar. Yes, put him to bed!
Sca. But, bless me, don't you see—
Phan. Do listen to me, I pray—
Tar. It certainly seems to me—
Sca. Bah—this is the only way!
Phan. It's rubbish absurd you growl!
Tar. You talk ridiculous stuff!
Sca. You're a drivelling barndoor owl!
Phan. You're a vapid and vain old muff!

[*All coming down to audience.*

So far we haven't quite solved the plot—
They're not a very ingenious lot—
But don't be unhappy,
It's still on the *tapis*,
We'll presently hit on a capital plot.

Sca. Suppose we all— [*Whispers.*
Phan. Now *there* I think you're right.
Then we might all— [*Whispers.*
Tar. That's true—we certainly might.
I'll tell you what— [*Whispers*
Sca. We will if we possibly can.
Then on the spot— [*Whispers.*
Phan. and Tar. Bravo! a capital plan!
Sca. That's exceedingly neat and new!
Phan. Exceedingly new and neat!
Tar. I fancy that that will do.
Sca. It's certainly very complete!
Phan. Well done, you sly old sap!
Tar. Bravo, you cunning old mole!
Sca. You very ingenious chap!
Phan. You intellectual soul!

[*All, coming down, and addressing audience.*

At last a capital plan we've got;
Never mind why and never mind what:
It's safe in my noddle—
Now off we will toddle,
And slyly develop this capital plot!

[*Business.* *Exeunt* SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS *in one direction, and* TARARA *in the other.*

Enter LORD DRAMALEIGH *and* MR. GOLDBURY.

Lord Dram. Well, what do you think of our first South Pacific Drawing-Room? Allowing for a slight difficulty with the trains, and a little want of familiarity with the use of the rouge-pot, it was, on the whole, a meritorious affair?

Gold. My dear Dramaleigh, it redounds infinitely to your credit.

Lord Dram. One or two judicious innovations, I think?

Gold. Admirable. The cup of tea and the plate of mixed biscuits were a cheap and effective inspiration.

Lord Dram. Yes—my idea, entirely. Never been done before.

Gold. Pretty little maids, the King's youngest daughters, but timid.

Lord Dram. That'll wear off. Young.

Gold. *That'll* wear off. Ha! here they come, by George. And without the Dragon! What can they have done with her?

Enter NEKAYA *and* KALYBA, *timidly.*

Nek. Oh, if you please Lady Sophy has sent us in here, because Zara and Captain Fitzbattleaxe are going on, in the

garden, in a manner which no well conducted young ladies ought to witness.

Lord Dram. Indeed, we are very much obliged to her Ladyship.

Kal. Are you? I wonder why.

Nek. Don't tell us if it's rude.

Lord Dram. Rude? Not at all. We are obliged to Lady Sophy because she has afforded us the pleasure of seeing you.

Nek. I don't think you ought to talk to us like that.

Kal. It's calculated to turn our heads.

Nek. Attractive girls cannot be too particular.

Kal. Oh, pray, pray do not take advantage of our unprotected innocence.

Gold. Pray be reassured—you are in no danger whatever.

Lord Dram. But may I ask—is this extreme delicacy—this shrinking sensitiveness—a general characteristic of Utopian young ladies?

Nek. Oh no; we are crack specimens.

Kal. We are the pick of the basket. *Would* you mind not coming quite so near? Thank you.

Nek. And please don't look at us like that; it unsettles us.

Kal. And we don't like it. At least, we *do* like it; but it's wrong.

Nek. *We* have enjoyed the inestimable privilege of being educated by a most refined and easily-shocked English lady, on the very strictest English principles.

Gold. But, my dear young ladies——

Kal. Oh, don't. You mustn't. It's too affectionate.

Nek. It really does unsettle us.

Gold. Are you really under the impression that English girls are so ridiculously demure? Why, an English girl of the highest type is the best, the most beautiful, the bravest, and the brightest creature that Heaven has conferred upon this world of ours. She is frank, open-hearted, and fearless, and never shows in so favourable a light as when she gives her own blameless impulses full play!

Nek. and Kal. Oh, you shocking story!

Gold. Not at all. I'm speaking the strict truth. I'll tell you all about her.

SONG.—MR. GOLDBURY.

A wonderful joy our eyes to bless,
In her magnificent comeliness,
Is an English girl of eleven stone two,
And five foot ten in her dancing shoe!

She follows the hounds, and on she pounds—
The "field" tails off and the muffs diminish—
Over the hedges and brooks she bounds
Straight as a crow, from find to finish.
At cricket, her kin will lose or win—
She and her maids, on grass and clover,
Eleven maids out—eleven maids in—
And perhaps an occasional "maiden over!"
Go search the world and search the sea,
Then come you home and sing with me
There's no such gold and no such pearl
As a bright and beautiful English girl!

With a ten mile spin she stretches her limbs,
She golfs, she punts, she rows, she swims—
She plays, she sings, she dances, too,
From ten or eleven till all is blue!
At ball or drum, till small hours come,
(Chaperon's fan conceals her yawning)
She'll waltz away like a teetotum,
And never go home till daylight's dawning.
Lawn-tennis may share her favours fair—
Her eyes a-dance and her cheeks a-glowing—
Down comes her hair, but what does she care?
It's all her own and it's worth the showing!
Go search the world, etc.

Her soul is sweet as the ocean air,
For prudery knows no haven there;
To find mock-modesty, please apply
To the conscious blush and the downcast eye.
Rich in the things contentment brings,
In every pure enjoyment wealthy,
Blithe as a beautiful bird she sings,
For body and mind are hale and healthy.
Her eyes they thrill with right goodwill—
Her heart is light as a floating feather—
As pure and bright as the mountain rill
That leaps and laughs in the Highland heather!
Go search the world, etc.

QUARTETTE.

Nek. Then I may sing and play?
Lord Dram. You may!
Kal. And I may laugh and shout?
Gold. No doubt!
Nek. These maxims you endorse?
Lord Dram. Of course!
Kal. You won't exclaim "Oh fie!"
Gold. Not I!

Gold. Whatever you are—be that:
Whatever you say—be true:
Straightforwardly act—
Be honest—in fact,
Be nobody else but *you*.

Lord Dram. Give every answer pat—
Your character true unfurl;
And when it is ripe,
You'll then be a type
Of a capital English girl!

All. Oh, sweet surprise—oh, dear delight,
To find it undisputed quite,
All musty, fusty rules despite,
That Art is wrong and Nature right!

Nek. When happy I,
With laughter glad
I'll wake the echoes fairly,
And only sigh
When I am sad—
And that will be but rarely!

Kal. I'll row and fish,
And gallop, soon—
No longer be a prim one—
And when I wish
To hum a tune,
It needn't be a hymn one?

Gold. and Lord Dram. No, no!
It needn't be a hymn one!

All (dancing). Oh, sweet surprise and dear delight
To find it undisputed quite—
All musty, fusty rules despite—
That Art is wrong and Nature right!

[*Dance, and off.*

Enter LADY SOPHY.

RECITATIVE.—LADY SOPHY.

Oh, would some demon power the gift impart
To quell my over-conscientious heart—
Unspeak the oaths that never had been spoken,
And break the vows that never shall be broken!

SONG.—LADY SOPHY.

When but a maid of fifteen year,
Unsought—unplighted—
Short petticoated—and, I fear,
Still shorter-sighted—
I made a vow, one early spring,
That only to some spotless king
Who proof of blameless life could bring
I'd be united.

For I had read, not long before,
Of blameless kings in fairy lore,
And thought the race still flourished here—
Well, well—
I was a maid of fifteen year!

The KING *enters and overhears this verse.*

Each morning I pursued my game
(An early riser);
For spotless monarchs I became
An advertiser:
But all in vain I searched each land,
So, kingless, to my native strand
Returned, a little older, and
A good deal wiser!
I learnt that spotless King and Prince
Have disappeared some ages since—
Even Paramount's angelic grace,
Ah, me!
Is but a mask on Nature's face!

[KING *comes forward.*

RECITATIVE.

King. Ah, Lady Sophy—then you love me!
For so you sing—

Lady S. No, by the stars that shine above me
(*indignant and surprised*). Degraded King!
(*Producing* Palace Peeper.)
For while these rumours, through the city bruited
Remain uncontradicted, unrefuted,
The object thou of my aversion rooted,
Repulsive thing!

King. Be just—the time is now at hand
When truth may published be,
These paragraphs were written and
Contributed by me!

Lady S. By you? No, no!

King. Yes, yes, I swear, by me!
I, caught in Scaphio's ruthless toil,
Contributed the lot!

Lady S. And *that* is why you did not boil
The author on the spot!

King. And *that* is why I did not boil
The author on the spot!

Lady S. I *couldn't* think why you did not boil.

King. But *I* know why I did not boil
The author on the spot!

DUET.—LADY SOPHY AND KING.

Lady S. Oh, the rapture unrestrained
Of a candid retractation;
For my sovereign has deigned
A convincing explanation—
And the clouds that gathered o'er,
All have vanished in the distance
And of Kings of fairy lore
One, at least, is in existence!

King. Oh, the skies are blue above,
And the earth is red and rosal,
Now the lady of my love
Has accepted my proposal!
For that *asinorum pons*
I have crossed without assistance,
And of prudish paragons
One, at least, is in existence!

[KING *and* LADY SOPHY *dance gracefully. While this is going on* LORD DRAMALEIGH *enters unobserved with* NEKAYA *and* MR. GOLDBURY *with* KALYBA. *Then enter* ZARA *and* CAPT. FITZBATTLEAXE. *The two* Girls *direct* ZARA'S *attention to the* KING *and* LADY SOPHY, *who are still dancing affectionately together. At this point the* KING *kisses* LADY SOPHY, *which causes the* Princesses *to make an exclamation. The* KING *and* LADY SOPHY *are at first much confused at being detected, but eventually throw off all reserve, and the four couples break into a wild Tarantella, and at the end exeunt severally.*

Enter all the male Chorus, *in great excitement, from various entrances, led by* SCAPHIO, PHANTIS, *and* TARARA, *and followed by the female* Chorus.

CHORUS.

Upon our sea-girt land
At our enforced command
Reform has laid her hand
Like some remorseless ogress—
And make us darkly rue
The deeds she dared to do—
And all is owing to
Those hated Flowers of Progress!

All. So down with them!
So down with them!
Reform's a hated ogress.
So down with them!
So down with them!
Down with the Flowers of Progress!

Flourish. *Enter* KING, *his three* Daughters, LADY SOPHY, *and the* FLOWERS OF PROGRESS.

King. What means this most unmannerly irruption?
Is this your gratitude for boons conferred?

Sca. Boons? Bah! A fico for such boons, say we!
These boons have brought Utopia to a standstill!
Our pride and boast—the Army and the Navy—
Have both been re-constructed and re-modelled

Upon so irresistible a basis
That all the neighbouring nations have disarmed—
And War's impossible! Your County Councillor
Has passed such drastic Sanitary laws
That all the doctors dwindle, starve, and die!
The laws, remodelled by Sir Bailey Barre,
Have quite extinguished crime and litigation:
The lawyers starve, and all the jails are let
As model lodgings for the working-classes!
In short—
Utopia, swamped by dull Prosperity,
Demands that these detested Flowers of Progress
Be sent about their business, and affairs
Restored to their original complexion!

King (*to* ZARA). My daughter, this is a very unpleasant state of things. What is to be done?

Zara. I don't know—I don't understand it. We must have omitted something,

King. Omitted something? Yes, that's all very well, but—— [SIR BAILEY BARRE *whispers to* ZARA.

Zara (*suddenly*). Of course! Now I remember! Why, I had forgotten the most essential element of all!

King. And that is——

Zara. Government by Party! Introduce that great and glorious element—at once the bulwark and foundation of England's greatness—and all will be well! No political measures will endure, because one Party will assuredly undo all that the other party has done; and while grouse is to be shot, and foxes worried to death, the legislative action of the country will be at a standstill. Then there will be sickness in plenty, endless lawsuits, crowded jails, interminable confusion in the Army and Navy, and, in short, general and unexampled prosperity!

All. Ulahlica! Ulahlica!

Phan. (*aside*). Baffled!

Sca. But an hour *will* come!

King. Your hour has come already—away with them, and let them wait my will! (SCAPHIO *and* PHANTIS *are led off in custody.*) From this moment Government by Party is adopted, with all its attendant blessings; and henceforward Utopia will no longer be a Monarchy (Limited), but, what is a great deal better, a Limited Monarchy!

FINALE.

Zara. There's a little group of isles beyond the wave—
So tiny, you might almost wonder where it is—
That nation is the bravest of the brave,
And cowards are the rarest of all rarities.

The proudest nations kneel at her command;
She terrifies all foreign-born rapscallions;
And holds the peace of Europe in her hand
With half a score invincible battalions!
Such, at least, is the tale
Which is borne on the gale,
From the island which dwells in the sea.
Let us hope, for her sake,
That she makes no mistake—
That she's all she professes to be!

King. Oh, may we copy all her maxims wise,
And imitate her virtues and her charities;
And may we, by degrees, acclimatize
Her Parliamentary peculiarities!
By doing so, we shall, in course of time,
Regenerate completely our entire land—
Great Britain is that monarchy sublime,
To which some add (but others do not) Ireland.
Such, at least, is the tale, etc.

CURTAIN.

C
W